Under Western Skies

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UNDER WESTERN SKIES

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

BALLADS AND POEMS FROM THE PACIFIC.

WHERE THE SUN SETS.

UNDER NORTH STAR AND SOUTHERN CROSS.

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

UNDER WESTERN SKIES

LIFE PICTURES FROM MEMORY

BY

FRANCIS SINCLAIR

THOUGH East is East, and West is West—
And the wide sea rolls between—
Yet very worst, and very best,
In both spheres I have seen!

'Tis not the hue, 'tis not the breed,
For God's hand fashioned all,
And heart is oak, or heart is weed,
As men stand firm, or fall!

I have found hearts of purest gold
Under wealth's load, and poor man's pack:
Yet—like God's Manna gifts of old—
Rich have no more, poor have no lack!

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

AT a late foregathering of our "Coterie of Wanderers" (the same Coterie I introduced to the reader in my preface to "Where the Sun Sets"), I gleaned, and have since put into readable shape I hope, the following adventures in various parts of the world. In looking them over they seem to me to deserve shelf-room in the abodes of those old-fashioned people who yet read books for their honesty of purpose and truth, as well as for entertainment, and relief from the weary round of every-day duties. And I trust that besides entertainment the reader will also find in this volume some profitable thoughts, which—as a critic wrote of a former book of mine—will leave a pleasant taste in the mouth, and wholesome sentiments in the heart.

Narratives for the truth of which the narrator could vouch have always been my favourites, they touch and appeal to me as all the beauty and charm of fiction do not appeal. In short, I have always preferred stories which came from memories in the heart to those constructed by the genius of the head. Judging my reader's tastes by my own, I have, in compiling these adventures, confined the collection to scenes through which I have passed, or of which I have had perfect knowledge. Where I have deviated at all from facts, has only been in substituting assumed names in cases where real names might possibly have caused annoyance; and, perhaps, inventing a word, or even a sentence here and there, when my memory was at fault, or my hastily jotted hieroglyphics became undecipherable, like Mr. Guppy's troublesome notes.

F. S.

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JAMES MELVILLE ESQUIRE
OF BLUE RIDGE STATION

JAMES MELVILLE ESQUIRE OF BLUE RIDGE STATION

PRELUDE

Oh! the land of Never-Never is mine with all its gold,
And the dreams a boy goes dreaming are mine—aye, twenty-fold.
You may ride straight to the westward (freehold all in every sense!)
From the streak o' dawn to sunset, ere you reach my boundary fence.

I came trudging up this country with my fortune in my soul,
And my swag upon my shoulders—worth a quid upon the whole—
Last shearing when I settled up with Bank, and men, and store,
The cashier put my yearly dot at thirty thou' and four!

There be sixty thousand acres, what we call the *Tussock Flat*,
It carries forty thousand sheep, and every one is fat;
There are ninety thousand yonder, which we call the *Salt-bush-run*,
And a better bit of grazing ain't beneath Australia's sun!

I own five hundred horse-flesh, counting mares and foals and all,
I paid last year four thousand for a stallion from Bengal;
They guaranteed his pedigree back to the Prophet's stud,
And when you go for stock like that, then you must pay for blood.

I gave the Gov' a pair of colts—better were never bred—
If they were worth a sixpence they were worth a thou' a head!
Of course when I'm in Sydney, it is dinner, lunch, and ball,
Besides a quiet informal smoke at any morning call.

You see, I'm fixed quite nicely—freehold all, no leasing chance—
And take it any way you like, 'twas a wonderful advance;
A poor boy worth a quid at most, bound for some unknown goal—
Just trudging, trudging, trudging with his fortune in his soul!

I used to dray the *Boss's* wool through sun, and dust, and rain,
It always took six weary weeks!—now *my* wool goes by *train*—
In those old days of trudging, I was just plain "Maxwell's *Jim*"—
But now that things are changed about, I'm *Esquire*, and he's *Tim*!

Of course Tim may be happier since the Bank chaps sold him out,
But that is not the question I am telling you about.
I really do not care so much anent this fine estate,
And dinners with the swell *élite* don't muchly elevate.

I'll tell you what is in my heart, what takes the foremost
place—
And wakes me up at midnight with the tears upon my face—
It 's a bonnie cozy cot hoose, in a Glen ayont Strathmore,
It 's the hearts I lov'd, and lov'd me, and that I can meet no
more!

Oh! the bonnie purple heather, and the burn that leapt
between,
And the sky that was the bluest mortal eyes had ever seen!
Oh! the sweet hush o' the gloamin' and a far faint muircock's
call
That but added to the silence, with God's mercy over all!

Ah yes! If God would give the choice—which cannot, can-
not be!
To part with all that I have won, and all the pride and glee—
Oh, it 's I would go a-trudging, with a light heart in my
breast,
But my course would be the eastward, not this dreary, love-
less west!

Back to all who ever lov'd me, and to all I lov'd the best,
And it 's then I'd find contentment, and it 's then my soul
could rest,
And I'd find the peace I tented when I left the Shieling
door,
And a grave at last beside my kin, in the Glen ayont
Strathmore!

CHAPTER I

THE LAND OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS

THE genial manager of the Bank invited me to an afternoon cruise, on his beautiful yacht *Sea-gull*, to visit some of the charming spots scattered around the splendid harbour of Sydney, or perhaps I should say "Port Jackson," as Sydney is really only the city.

The *Sea-gull* was not supposed to be an ocean-going craft, but she was admirably suited to my friend's requirements, and there was plenty of scope to exercise her talents in the numberless bewitching coves, bays, and reaches to be found in the grand expanse of water from the "Heads" to Parramatta.

The *Sea-gull* was a dandy little steam yacht, most commodious and comfortable for her size. And one may judge of the care bestowed upon her by the fact that each guest was invited to remove his, or her, boots, and don a pair of canvas slippers for fear that the immaculate decks should be injured by rough soles.

My friend the Banker was an admirable host,

and the *Sea-gull* behaved beautifully. The engines worked noiselessly, the coal was practically smokeless, and we had a splendid cruise. About five o'clock on that peerless afternoon the anchor was dropped in an enchanting little cove near Manly Beach; and then, amid jollity and good fellowship, all hands did ample justice to a delightful tea.

Thereafter men and women went off into groups or pairs, the men to enjoy their pipes and cigars, and the ladies to compare notes on domestic matters, and the late gay Christmas festivities. Shortly after we started from Circular Quay that afternoon the Banker had introduced me to a friend of his, the Hon. James Melville, but I had had little opportunity of speaking to him as his company seemed much sought after by the ladies as well as the gentlemen of the party. Now, however, he had got himself nicely fixed choc-a-bloc forward, where it was impossible to be surrounded, and where it was evident to the most casual observer that he wished to be alone for a brief space. But as I had not had a chance to exchange a single word with the Hon. James since our hurried introduction three hours before, I determined to exchange a word or two with him now, and en-

deavour to discover what one at least of the southern hemisphere honourables was like.

On pretence of having no matches, although I had, I asked Melville for a light. Without a word he handed me his match-box, a curiously carved concern, cut out of a solid piece of bog-oak. When I handed back the box, and thanked him, I remarked that such a unique thing must surely be an heirloom.

"Yes," he responded; "my father, who was a shepherd in the Glens, found a fine bit of bog-oak one day as he was helping a sheep out of a peat-bog. My father was a clever hand with his knife, and he had plenty of time for practice during his lonely days, and so he fashioned this, and gave it to me, and I would part with all the fine souvenirs I possess, and they are not a few, rather than lose this little relic of a father's love. You are from the Glens, like myself—or else I greatly misjudge—and you know the feelings of the Glen people, that wonderful characteristic expressed in the touching aphorism 'we canna forget.'"

At this moment a contingent began to bear down upon us, and we had to move aft as we heard our banking friend call cheerily:

"Come! Come! You two men from the land

o' cakes! Nobody is allowed to hide away on this ship, unless engaged in making love—with my approval, of course!"

As we moved aft Melville asked me to meet him at the club next morning, to have our talk out. And so began a most congenial acquaintanceship, which afterwards grew into a sincere friendship.

Melville gave me a pressing and most kind invitation to go with him to his Station, and see the life of the real Australian back country, and the changes wrought there by the skill and indomitable energy of man.

But before we made our excursion in the Never-Never country, the Hon. James Melville invited me to his town house, and introduced me to his pleasant, handsome wife, and charming daughters, Elsie and Nora. He had also two sons, but I did not meet them as they were in England at Oxford, "being fitted for their station in life," as my friend remarked with a curious expression in his eyes; but whether of pride or sarcasm I could not at the moment decide, nor have I quite decided yet.

CHAPTER II

THE IRON HORSE *VERSUS* THE BULLOCK DRAY

THE journey from Sydney to "Blue Ridge"—the name of my friend's Station—was by railway from start to finish. But when Melville first went there a very small portion of the distance was by railway, the greater part being only rough bush roads, or no roads at all. Now the railway had civilized the country, one might say, and we passed through towns, villages, gardens, and farms, and then through great open stretches of grazing country.

Melville's family did not go up country with us upon that expedition, it being quite an impromptu plan of his to let me see some of the Never-Never country in its gloomy natural savage state, and also in its improved condition under the artesian system.

It only took us two days easy travelling by train to reach Blue Ridge Station. Melville told me that it used to take six weeks or two months by bullock dray in the early days! Then the journey was gradually shortened as the railway crept slowly inland following the adven-

turous brave men and women who faced and endured the lonely, hard life of the wilderness, to find for themselves and their children a home which was denied them in their native land. But Melville explained to me that these settlers were a later invasion of the pushing white race, who were quick to see and take advantage of their opportunity when they saw the Iron Horse not far off. But when Melville made his advent into that part of the country, through which we were now travelling luxuriously, without labour or the slightest bother, the modes of travel were by lumbering bullock dray for the ordinary well-to-do settlers—and lucky they were if they had a good team—horse-back for the upper sort, and Shanks's pony and humping their bluey for the under ranks, "cockatoos," as all the small fry were termed by the great squatters in the early days. The squatters had no love for the "cockatoos." Most of the large "runs" were only held on lease at the beginning, and a man might come along with his wife and a son or two, and under the land laws he could settle down upon any spot he took a fancy to, and, after fulfilling certain simple requirements, get a title to his claim. If many of these sort came on to a run, they could

almost ruin a big property, as they, of course, always pitched upon the most fertile spots, and where water was obtainable. This process of settlement was known as "picking the eyes out of a run," and was looked upon with hate and dread by those squatters whose runs had the most attractions for the cockatoo tribe.

These matters were explained to me by Melville, as we passed over country now covered by homesteads, but which was almost uninhabited when he first saw the Never-Never country.

When we came to the end of our journey, and descended from the train at a neat little station which was the end of the railway to "Blue Ridge," there was a well appointed dog-cart awaiting us, with a tidy groom at the horse's head, and everything and everybody wearing such a look of contentment and well-to-do-ness that I could hardly believe Melville when he assured me that on the day he first trudged over that very spot he was nearly perishing with hunger and thirst! *This*, on a land that as far as I could see was covered with orchards, and little crystal streams of life-giving water, staggered me, so I wisely said nothing, but did as I was told, namely, jumped up beside

Melville, while the smart groom let go the horse's head—at the word of command—and swung himself on to the back seat like a clever acrobat, while the gay thoroughbred made a pretty plunge which nearly sent me over the rail and sprawling on to the road. This sportsmanlike start put Melville into excellent humour; for he gaily said to the groom, "Kangaroo seems a bit fresh, Thomas! Have you exercised him every day, as I told you to do when I went to town?"

"Yes, sir! I gave him a trot every day either out to the old Homestead, or out Bloody-Jack's tree way, until your wire came telling me to meet the afternoon train every day until you arrived. And I've noticed that he got more and more impatient, just like a human Christian, every day that you didn't come, until at last I could hardly keep him quiet with all the coaxing I could do! The fact is, sir, he was wearying to see you, and when he knew that you were up at last he just had to jump for joy! He is a very wonderful horse, sir, and I'll be bound knows more in half his brains than any swagger that ever set foot on this Station. And that means a lot, for the swaggers are uncommon numerous since your honour gave orders that all them

tramping swabs were not only to have a night's lodging and grub, but each one was to have three days' rations for the asking, and you bet! they ain't at all bashful about the asking."

My friend threw back his head and laughed loud and long at the groom's speech. This set Kangaroo capering again in such a lively manner that even the accomplished Thomas had to take his gloved hands out of their graceful fold, and hold on tight to the rail, while Melville said in a soothing tone to Kangaroo:

"Steady, my lad! Steady, my good old Kangaroo! It's your master, my beauty! Go steady, my pretty lad."

Whereupon the splendid horse dropped into an even pace, cocking one ear forward, and one backward, as all sensible steeds should do.

In after days, when Melville told me the story of his advent into the back country, the groom's reflections on what he evidently thought his master's over-tenderness to the "tramp-swabs" came into my mind very vividly, and added to my respect and appreciation of the man who in great worldly prosperity, honour, and success, did not forget his humble whilom companions of the road and wilderness, and did what lay in his power to lighten their hard journey of life.

The little railway station was on the southern boundary of Melville's Run, and it took Kangaroo fully two hours to wheel us to Blue Ridge Homestead. The whole way was over almost level country, with rolling downs breaking the monotony here and there. As we went along, I was astonished to see so much water about in a part of Australia which I had been told suffered from lack of that precious commodity, and general aridity. When I took notice of this, and asked my friend from whence came the abundant supply of the life-giving fluid, he simply held his whip perpendicularly, with the butt-end pointing downward, and in a moment I knew, by his significant gesture, that all the flashing water, and consequent fertility which I beheld spreading for miles on either hand, was from the earth, and not from the clouds of heaven as is usual in less sunny lands.

While we went swinging along at eight or nine miles an hour we had often to pull up for Thomas to jump down to open gates to let us through the paddocks. At last, as we emerged from a splendid clump of Australian wattle, and other native trees, in delicious bloom, we came in full view of the homestead of Blue Ridge Station, and a very imposing place it was.

The house, or rather mansion, was a fine structure, and its surroundings were in perfect keeping with it. Splendidly extensive green lawns—so seldom obtainable in hot countries—stretched far and wide around the house. Any elevation or declivity had been skilfully manipulated to give effect to the clumps, and lines, and single trees growing in profusion, yet never obstructing the view, only adding interest and charm to the prospect at every change of one's position.

When we swept up to the fine front entrance, and Thomas sprang to the horse's head, with the agility of twenty fewer years than, his master whispered to me, were to his account, a quiet looking gentleman came forward and shook hands heartily with Melville, who introduced him to me as Mr. Davidson, and added:

"Mr. Davidson is manager of Blue Ridge, and what he doesn't know about the Station isn't worth knowing!"

Then we went into the house, which I found as spacious inside as it was imposing outwardly. I was shown into a large and finely furnished bedroom, with a bath and dressing-room attached. Subsequently I found to my astonishment and delight that the whole splendid

establishment was more like a wealthy nobleman's house of the old style in England than any place I had seen in the Colonies. And later it became an endless pleasure to explore, under Melville's intelligent ciceronage, room after room with all their art treasures and colonial rarities which he had collected from many sources.

I spent a delightful month at Blue Ridge; part, if not all, of each day in my friend's congenial company, some days riding to different out-stations and various interesting places on one of the easiest-going and most sure-footed nags it has ever been my good fortune to mount —and I have mounted many, both in civilized and uncivilized lands, in out-of-the-way corners of the world.

Up to that time I had not had much experience in "artesian irrigation." I had seen some of its beneficent results in Algeria and elsewhere, but I had never seen anything like the grand system carried out on Blue Ridge. Here were miles and miles of splendid grazing land—which a few years before were as barren as a London pavement—now supporting tens of thousands of fat, contented cattle and sheep.

As my friend and I explored Blue Ridge in

easy stages day after day, he showed me some portion of country which was above the water level, and which remained in its primitive state, a very miserable state it was—in fact, utter worthlessness. But Melville declared that he would yet reclaim those parts by some wonderful system of hydraulics which he explained quite lucidly to me, but which I cannot explain to you.

One morning there came, by special messenger, an imposing, broad-sealed document for "Hon. James Melville, Blue Ridge Station." When my friend glanced over the contents, he sighed and said:

"Heigh-ho! The burden of greatness! I am commanded to be present in the Legislative Council on the 15th instant, and this is the 10th. Therefore it is boot and saddle and away south, as our forefathers in the bonnie glens used to do at the command of the Chief, for a raid into fat, lazy, merry England!" "Ah, then," I replied, "this is to be the end of my fine raid into the broad estate of the braw Melvilles, and living on the fat of their rich lands, and courteously entertained by the high Lord of the Manor himself!"

"Not a bit of it," retorted my friend. "I must go, but we are not going to part like a pair of

cool tramps with no more warning than 'So long!' at the turning of the road.

"I'll tell you what you have to do! Just stay where you are until I return. I cannot possibly be absent more than a month—the sessions are never long at this time of year. And you must think what a blank look the place would have to me if on my return I found you had gone!" And he held out his hand as freely as if we had been chums ever since the Glen days! And I clapped my hand into his with the same hearty freedom.

CHAPTER III

COCKATOO'S SPLENDID LEAP

My friend Melville was absent at his official duties for a little over a month, and I managed to put in that time both profitably and pleasantly mooning about the beautiful Blue Ridge Homestead, or roaming over the vast estate in company with Mr. Davidson, the manager.

We had some splendidly exciting rides in mustering half-wild cattle on the far back rough portions of the Run, which lay some twenty or twenty-five miles due west from the Home

Station. Of course there were stockyards and paddocks, stables and men's huts, an overseer's cottage, etc., this part of the estate being worked quite independently of the Home Station, although under the general superintendence of the chief manager Davidson.

I passed a very pleasant, and even exciting, week at "Wattle Creek," as it is called. I was out every day on my faithful little cob, "Cockatoo." He was one of the cleverest of the clever, and what he didn't know of the tricks of half-wild bullocks, and how to keep clear of their sharp horns, wasn't worth knowing. Cockatoo never lost his presence of mind, which is a great virtue in a horse, and in a man also, I may remark. Just to show you what I mean I will recount one of the many incidents which often occurred in mustering those five thousand head of cattle on the rough ranges of Wattle Creek.

One day I got separated from everybody, but this did not matter at all, as I knew the lay of the land by this time quite well. Cockatoo and I were coming slowly and carefully down the bed of a dry creek looking hither and thither if perchance we might discover a pool of muddy water to cool our parched tongues. But never a drop could we descry, when just as we were

nearing the plain, and were almost clear of the scrub, we turned a jutting cliff, and behold! there was a beautiful bower of solid rock, all the upper portion, where cattle could not reach, covered with the most splendid drooping bunches of maidenhair and other ferns. Cockatoo turned eagerly into the fairy alcove, and shoved his nose into any cool corners he could reach, evidently with much satisfaction.

I was on the point of dismounting to join Cockatoo's hunt for a drop of moisture, when I heard a noise behind us, and we both at one and the same moment caught sight of a fierce bullock staring at us with the glare in his eyes which means the reckless madness of the over-driven beast. When a bullock gets into that state he becomes dangerously unmanageable, and must simply be left alone until he cools down, and so this savage brute had been dropped by the stockmen.

I knew enough of cattle—and Cockatoo knew a good deal more—to be fully aware that the beast would presently charge, and that we had apparently no chance of escape excepting by frightening the bullock, and so making him turn up or down the dry creek. But there was no vestige of fear in those blood-shot eyes and

fiery nostrils. It was impossible for us to escape into the scrub, the cliff fenced us in on three sides, and on the fourth side stood the fierce beast with slaughter in his eyes, and handy horns on his head two or three feet long.

Without an admonition from me, wise little Cockatoo slued sharply round, faced the savage bullock, and gave that startling blast which is finely and tersely described by the ancient writer: "The glory of his nostrils is terrible." And I felt the good creature's muscles grow firm and hard in preparation to face our desperate position; and as if he were intimating to me to sit firm, and keep my courage up! Then the great savage beast lowered his head, and came thundering at us with a bellow that made the echoes roar in response. In that awful instant Cockatoo's intention flashed into my mind also, and I seconded the noble horse's plan to the best of my ability, by holding up his head, and touching his sides with my heels to show him that I, too, understood, and was ready! Just as the brute gave another infernal bellow, and his lowered horns were within a yard of Cockatoo's knees, the splendid horse made his wonderful leap, viz., almost straight up—we had no room for a run—touching the bullock's back with his

hind feet, thereby gaining additional impetus—and landing safe and sound some yards beyond the astounded and confused beast.

The gallant little nag showed no desire to pause after this splendid achievement, so I let him have his head, and he went over the ground at a fine rate, every minute or two giving utterance to a most comical, contented little snort—altogether different from the awful war-blast he thundered from his nostrils as he gathered himself together for his desperate leap.

All the bovine genus lower the head when they charge. This idiosyncrasy of the race Cockatoo knew perfectly well, and therefore had no fear of the wicked horns when making his tremendous jump. His care was to measure with his eye the exact distance so as to strike the bullock's back properly and make no error in our dangerous game of leap-frog, and he made none! thereby saving my life and his own, brave, wise little horse that he was! The instant that Cockatoo and I landed from our wonderful flying leap, I looked back to see if the beast intended to give chase; but the last I saw of him he was standing stock still, staring this way and that, as if he were utterly bamboozled, which no doubt he was.

After that adventure I adopted Cockatoo not only as my favourite horse, but as my friend and counsellor in queer, rocky, swampy, and all dangerous places, and whenever he turned from any suspicious-looking spot, and shook his head, I never insisted upon pitting my judgement against his. We must have done hundreds of miles in pleasant fellowship together, and I have much comfort in reflecting that all our travels and adventures were delightful and mutually satisfactory. I trust that the balance of his mundane life will be comfortable and satisfactory; and when his time comes may he rest *in pace*, brave, good little Cockatoo!

CHAPTER IV

THE SECRET OF BLUE RIDGE PROSPERITY

Melville returned from Sydney in a little over a month. His wife and daughters came up with him, as well as a gay party of young friends. In the great house there was ample accommodation for twice as many guests, but it quite changed our mode of life from our former go-as-you-

please style to the more punctilious regime of the ladies.

After a few weeks of this gay and really delightful life, Melville proposed to his wife that he should take me over to the "Farm," which I then learned was the original Home Station in the early days. It was situated about thirty miles from the present homestead, and was called the "Farm" because all the hay, grain, and other things required for the entire estate were grown there, and distributed by bullock dray, and horse cart, wherever there were good roads, or pack horses to the very rough out-stations. This method of having one farm to do all the farm business was found much more economical and satisfactory than each out-station growing its own stuff.

There was a telephone wire between the Home Station and the Farm, and Mrs. Melville at once got into communication with the people there, to warn them of our intended invasion.

"You see," she smilingly observed to me, "my husband is accustomed to drop into the farm unannounced, and they don't mind him, as they are very old friends. But when he takes another with him, I think it is only fair to let Mrs. Maxwell know in advance, especially as

she is not so young as she used to be, and naturally does not like to be caught unaware."

One *fine* morning—but I need hardly mention what is merely a truism in that delightful part of the world according to my memory! —Melville and I, after a cordial adieu to Madam and her daughters, and a general *au revoir* to the house party who had assembled to see us start, took our seats in the dogcart, and at a signal Thomas let the impatient Kangaroo have his head, and with one splendid plunge we were off down the avenue in grand style, followed by a merry chorus of farewells and good wishes. There was hardly a breath of wind stirring, but our dashing pace through the paddock gave a pleasant sense of coolness to the brilliant sparkling atmosphere.

We accomplished that exhilarating journey in the happiest fashion, and in the smart time of three hours, including four or five brief stops for a few words with his men whom Melville met or overtook on the road. And it was truly delightful to witness how cleverly and willingly good, handsome Kangaroo fulfilled his contract, never making one disagreeable demonstration, never a careless slovenly trip, never a silly scare at a falling leaf, or at the sudden screech of a

cockatoo, or a laughing jackass! Just head up, mane and tail flowing gracefully and comfortably, one ear forward, one ear backward, and strict attention to business. As we entered the farm proper, the land seemed more adapted to agriculture than any I had yet seen on Blue Ridge Station. Not only was there a greater abundance of water, but the land looked dark and rich, with that gently undulating surface which makes it easy to plough, and, more important still, to irrigate. The farm house was a typical old-style station building, a long, low one-storey wooden house, with a veranda back and front. And although everything about the place indicated comfort, yet there was no attempt at pretentious style. Everybody simply rode or drove up to the veranda, and hitched his horse to one of the many hitching places scattered around: or if it was a quiet nag a man rode, and he chanced to be in a hurry, he would either ride close to the veranda, and rap with his whip on the floor, or he would hook his bridle to a veranda post, and go in search of the overseer, or see to whatever his business was.

We drove up to what was about the middle of the house. There was really no door that could be properly called the *front* door, for there

were six doors opening on to the front veranda—old colonial fashion, so as to save room inside of the house—but Kangaroo knew exactly where his master was accustomed to dismount, and there he quietly came to a standstill. As the overseer had notice of our coming, he was at home to receive us. My friend at once put me at my ease by introducing me to "Mr. Maxwell, of the Farm," and also that gentleman's wife—a pleasant, sensible lady a good bit past middle age; indeed both Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell I judged to be eight or ten years older than my friend, and afterwards I found that my first impressions were correct. Mr. and Mrs. Maxwell seemed a very happy and contented couple. Exceedingly intelligent, and well posted on the news of the world. One day I remarked to Melville that these good qualities were not frequently met with in the bush; whereupon he smiled a bit sadly, and said: "I'll tell you the secret by and by." And he did tell me afterwards, and a very curious secret it was.

After the usual early station dinner, I had a long read of some fine old back numbers of that prince of magazines, "Chambers's Journal," and it used to be better in the old days than it is now (although it is still the best magazine of

its kind extant). While I read, and enjoyed my rest, Melville talked over farm matters with his overseer.

In this quiet fashion began my sojourn at the farm, and a very enjoyable time I had of it. Plenty of riding and driving and very good shooting, for many birds collected about the farm for the sake of a quiet feed on the splendid crops of grain, and did considerable damage, although the overseer kept a tribe of black fellows, with their funny families, for the express purpose of scaring the beautiful thieves away from the crops.

I need hardly say that I became deeply interested in the artesian system of irrigation which had made at least two-thirds of Blue Ridge independent of rain! I never ceased to wonder at the marvellous achievement of making the barren land blossom like the rose, by the miracle of forcing life-giving streams from the barren ground itself, in ceaseless and abundant profusion!

Of course, artesian wells vary in their flow according to depth, size of bore, force of water struck, etc. Therefore well boring is a most exciting work, quite as much as gold digging, and if a good flow is struck it is much more

profitable because it is nearly always permanent, while your hopes of nuggets as a rule vanish after you bottom your shaft with weary toil.

I had the great privilege of being present when water was struck in a well five or six miles distant from the farm homestead. My friend Melville had really come to the farm at this time in the hope of seeing this well completed. It had been a very serious undertaking from the beginning. Most of the boring had been through extra hard rock, and the drill had now reached a depth of nearly two thousand feet, and the engineers were expecting to strike water at any moment.

One morning Melville had a message from the engineers to the effect that the water symptoms were strong, so after an early breakfast we started for the scene of operations, to be on hand in case water was struck. Two thousand feet is a very great depth, and the engineers were expecting a grand flow, and I am happy to say that they were not disappointed.

We trotted over in the dogcart in good time, and found all hands in a sort of calm state of suppressed excitement. To the engineers' sensitively-attuned faculties there were strong indications that they were on the point of striking

water, and we had hardly taken our positions at a respectable distance, when there were sharp commands to the engine-driver, followed by a wild rattle of chains and cranks, and a noise like the first low murmur of a thunderstorm—then the earth gave up her treasures of fertility which had been lying hidden since the Creation, or certainly since the Flood!

It was one of the fine clear sort of wells with no impediment, and a flow (as was proved afterwards) of over two hundred thousand gallons per twenty-four hours.

It was a splendid sight to see the water go straight up in the air some twenty or thirty feet, and then spread gracefully like a great mushroom, and fall to the earth with a splashing, delicious music. Melville fairly danced with delight, and shook hands with everybody he could reach, and even I could not refrain clapping my hands, and giving utterance to the wild slogan of the Glens! As if to add to the hilarity of the happy occasion, two or three dozen almost naked blacks came rushing upon the scene, capering about like mad dingos, and yelling with wild excitement, and cooeeing for the rest of the tribe to come and see the glory which the white men had brought to light!

And truly it was a sight to rouse a man's soul to the wildest enthusiasm. A desert where man and beast perished like withered leaves, when the blessed rain fell not, now rendered immune from drought and all its horrors!

CHAPTER V

BEGIN AT THE BEGINNING

The night following that exciting day, as we sat by our cheery wood fire (the nights were getting a bit chilly in spite of the hot days) smoking the pipe of peace after the great excitement of the day, Melville suddenly put his pipe on the mantel, and, slapping his knee, burst forth:

"That splendid flow is worth to-day ten thousand pounds in the open market. But it is worth a good deal more to me in the satisfaction and joy of seeing in my mind's eye the acres and acres of crops and grazing which it will produce, and the comforts it will bring to men and animals alike! I never see a well brought to a successful issue but it brings back very vividly to my memory the first well ever bored

on Blue Ridge, and that was some thirty-five years ago!

"But before I tell you of that great event, I must relate what led up to it, and to do that properly I must simply begin at the beginning. You remember that when we foregathered at the Banker's picnic, I told you that I was from the Glens, and that I jaloused that you were of the heather also.

"My father was head shepherd on the Duke's estate, and I being his only son just followed in his footsteps until I was eighteen or nineteen years of age, and then my heart took a 'scunner' at the life, its narrowness, and its weary monotony, and changeless drudgery. But it was no easy matter to explain the state of my mind to our calm, self-repressed household. But one Sabbath morn as my father and mother, sisters, and under-shepherd with his wife and a squad of weans were all going to the village kirk—where each one of us had gone Sabbath after Sabbath all our longer or shorter lives—I told my father and mother that I had made up my mind to go to Australia!

"My father was a very wise man, as so many of the Glen folk are, and he never angered me by words of protest, at my foolish determination

—as I know he thought it—he only laid his hand on my head, and said, 'The Lord bless thee, and keep thee, the Lord make his face shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee, the Lord lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace.'

"Then the dear old man went calmly on: 'My son! you were born into the Glen life as all our family have been for many generations, and not one of all the line has ever disgraced the Glen to my knowledge, and few have ever left it. My two grand-uncles James and William Melville fell into the same kind of madness that has befallen you; and went out into the great, dangerous world. James won a captaincy, and fell in the French wars, and William went to sea, and after winning an honourable rank perished in the frozen North with his commander, Sir John Franklin. Others of the Melvilles fell on the disastrous field of Culloden! But never a man of them all—however foolish they were to leave the Glen where God had placed them—tarnished the name of their fathers. And wherever you go never forget that important truth. If you forget your honour, you will certainly forget your God, and then you will be no son of mine!'

"That was all that was said or done upon the subject. I sometimes caught my mother in tears, but very seldom—our folk are not prone to weep or to show their feelings like southern people.

"So I departed from the humble home of much hard work, sometimes scant fare, and little of what the world calls amusement; but a home of all the simple virtues, love, truth, industry, and thrift, which go to build up strong, brave men and women.

"I will pass lightly over my hard struggle to reach Australia. Suffice it to say that I suffered all the hard things which rough sailors call sport, and thoughtlessly inflict upon all greenhorns who fall into their clutches. And I was a good subject for them—an utterly ignorant country-bred lad who had never seen even a large boat, let alone a great ship!

"I engaged to work my passage, a position which sailors term 'Jimmy-Ducks,' and it is a woeful position, rendering the victim legitimate prey for all manner of tricks and downright ill usage. I had not a single friend on board, all I can say is that some were less brutishly cruel than others. Among my most particular tormentors was a young man some two or three

years my senior, and considerably heavier than I was in those days. Besides, he was far ahead of me in sea knowledge, and knowledge is power at sea, as well as on land.

"Bill Bleach—that was my tormentor's name—was always planning or executing some trick, or rather outrage, upon me, much to the amusement of the sailors, and even of the officers, although they pretended not to see. At last God arranged that this evil should come to an end—at least that is what I thought at the time, and what I am really inclined to think yet!

"One day the second mate called me aft to sweep up shavings and chips which the carpenter had left after some job or other. Bill Bleach was coiling up ropes by the mainmast, and of course he watched his opportunity, and the opportunity came—as it always does come to all who watch, either for good or evil. As I came along with the broom over my shoulder, and was in the act of stepping over the topsail halyards which the men had left lying across the deck after hoisting the sail into position, Bill cleverly jerked up the rope and caught me nicely on the shins, and sent me sprawling like a spread-eagle, while the broom went flying along the deck. There was a general loud laugh

from all who witnessed the trick, the loudest and heartiest from the hero and originator of the pretty sport.

"It was dinner-time in the cuddy, there were no passengers on deck, and the only officer about was the second mate. As I rose from my ignominious sprawl a mighty passion seized me, and a horrible desire to slay my persecutor! I never learned the noble art of self-defence, as it is called, but I felt at that moment the strength of a giant, and I rushed at Bill Bleach with the lust of murder in my soul! He knew, by my look, I suppose, that I at last meant battle, and he braced himself against the mast. He had time to deliver one smashing blow, which I felt more or less all the rest of the voyage, but it was the last as well as the first, for the next moment I had him by the throat, lying on his back, and was pounding the life out of him with my right fist, while I held him fast with my left hand on his throat, and my knees firmly planted on his body.

"I am really afraid that Satan so possessed me at that moment that if I had been left alone for another three minutes I should have had the grievous sin of murder on my soul. But God is ever merciful to His servants, and He remem-

bered my father's petition, and saved him the disgrace and grief of his son becoming a felon.

"When the second mate, and the men who were about, saw that instead of having the fun of seeing Bill give me a good licking, they were going to witness the murder of that young man, there was a general rush, and, with a few kicks and hauls, we were dragged apart, gasping and raving like a pair of young maniacs.

"Bill was confined to his bunk for a fortnight, and for more than a month he showed the effects of our encounter. One pleasing result of my victory—for it was a victory—was the decided improvement of the crew's manner towards me. Never after that day of deadly battle did a man play a shabby trick on me; nor did an officer call me a 'darned land-lubber' for some trifling misunderstanding of an order. Even Bleach himself, after giving me a wide berth for six weeks, when he saw that the crew's improved manners towards me were permanent—shook hands, and hoped that we would be friends!

"In due time my hard voyage on the ship *Isle of Bute*, my first and last long voyage, came to an end; for I never again went home, and I will never go now! It is like so many things in this world, 'Too late.'

"Before I left the old ship I went boldly aft to the skipper to say good-bye. Not that I had any love for him, and he had never spoken one word to me, good or bad. But I had a vague feeling in my simple Glen heart, that he was my chief for the time being, and although I had always had a lively fear of him as a great commander, yet the knowledge that now I was once more in touch with the glorious world of land, and free from the lonely world of cruel sea, put new courage and hope into my foolish young heart. So, with all my worldly effects tied safely up in a little tartan shawl, in the same fashion as my mother had tied them up when I left the Glen, I marched aft to the poop where Captain Mackenzie was smoking his morning pipe.

"'Good-bye, sir!' said I. 'The voyage is now over, and I am going on shore!'

"The old man seemed very much astonished. He took the pipe out of his mouth, stared up at the yards as if to make sure that the voyage was really over, and then his eyes came back to me, but he did not utter a word. Feeling that there was nothing further to be said or done, I repeated my 'Good-bye, sir!' and was turning away, when the old man plunged his hand into

his trousers' pocket, pulled out some mixed coins, and put a sovereign into my hand, saying:

"'Don't change it, and then you won't spend it!'

"Grabbing it very tightly, until I should find a safe repository for my fortune, I walked on to Circular Quay, Sydney, and, with what courage I could muster, went boldly into my future.

CHAPTER VI

THE NEVER-NEVER COUNTRY

"THAT invasion of Australia was a good many years ago, and I was only an inexperienced boy, but I had brains enough to know that the road to success was towards the border-land of civilization, where strong, willing hands—and I had those—were required to subdue the wild exuberance of Nature. Realizing this fact, I made my way to a railway station, shrewdly guessing that as Sydney was on the sea coast, any railway must of necessity run inland. After fossicking around, I found the station, where a greasy man in dungaree trousers and jumper was vigorously polishing an engine, and I asked

if he wanted a boy to help him! At this he looked me all over and then laughed. I thought that a good sign, so I laughed too, and picked up a rag and began polishing as nearly like his way as I knew how.

"After working silently for half an hour or so, the man stopped, stretched himself, took a negro-head stick of tobacco from his pocket, bit off a chew, and offered me a bite. I thanked him, but shook my head and went on with my work. The man put the stick of tobacco back into his pocket, leaned against the engine, and watched me at work. After a while he said:

"'Where in thunder have you come from? And what the blazes are you after—anyhow!'

"I thought the man's words and voice had a kind of threat in them, so I stopped rubbing and looked in his face with a sort of surprise, I suppose, for he gave his leg a resounding slap, expectorated copiously, rolled his quid into the other cheek, laughed uproariously, and said:

"'Well, you are a sweet little cherub, I don't think! going about helping poor hard-worked coves with their jobs! I have been ten years in this God-forsaken bloomin' country, but you are the first innocent kid that I ever saw offer

to lift a stick before making a bargain about the payment.' Then after looking at me a little longer, he asked:

"'Are you hungry?' and, receiving a quick nod in affirmation, threw down his rags, arranged his buckets, and calling to me, 'Come along, cherub!' led the way through a gateway into a narrow street, and stopped at one of the numerous little houses that were jammed together in the smallest possible space, and I remember thinking that we had more room in the Old Land, than they had in vast unpeopled Australia. But that is the way that foolish human creatures choke themselves to death in the midst of the great open healthy lands which God has given so freely.

"There was a tap by the door, which my new-found friend turned on, and fossicking around found a bit of soap, washed his hands, then passed it on to me, and in two minutes our toilet was completed. A comely young person came to the door, and, after looking me over 'fore and aft' as sailors say, she said to the man: 'Well! Jim Sleeper! Who have you picked up this time?' To which he replied, with a cheery laugh:

"'My dear Mrs. Sleeper! I found this newly

fledged little cherub, and as you are a religious woman, I thought that you would like to give him a pannikin of tea, and a doughboy. For you have often told me, among other things, 'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.' His wife—as I now could see the woman was—looked sternly at her husband, and said: 'Jim! you needn't add blasphemy to your many other sins!' But she got no further, for Jim caught her round the neck and kissed her with much gusto, for which liberty he received a sounding slap; and then we were all on excellent terms, and I was invited to partake of one of the best remembered meals of my life—cooked and served by a woman's hands, after four months of the dismal monotony of a man's slushy sea-cooking.

"I found that James Sleeper was an engineer on a goods train which carried freight into the country twice a week, and he told me that next morning he would start on his half-weekly trip, and if I wished to go into the Never-Never land—as I had told him I was anxious to do—he would take me as far as the rail went. And, moreover, as he thought I was a willing cove to work he would let me have a meal here and

there on the road, if I lent a hand at discharging and taking on goods at the stations.

"Of course I gladly accepted Jim's terms, and although I know now that he did not lose by the bargain, I felt, and do still feel, grateful to the kindly fellow for his and his wife's frank kindness to one from whom they could by no possible means hope for any return. But strange to say there was a return. And the engineer who made such a successful finish of the well to-day is Jim Sleeper's son. And he is permanently in my employ, with a cottage and garden on the station, and what is more, a good family. My old friends Jim and his wife, who through their thoughtful kindness gave me my first start in Australia, still live in the same comfortable little house—which I made freehold for them—in memory of that glorious feed when we were all young and hearty, and fit to enjoy those splendid doughboys.

"At the end of my engagement with Sleeper, which was the end of the railway system in those days, I bade him farewell, and humping my 'bluey' in orthodox fashion, I set my face determinedly towards the setting sun, for I had got it firmly fixed into my young head that 'Westward the course of empire takes its way'

And so I went a-trudging that day, and many a weary day thereafter. I picked up odd jobs as I went along, but I never stayed more than a week or two in one place, so I only made my grub, and a few shillings over, here and there. But even this method enabled me to keep the skipper's advice regarding his 'quid.' Therefore I always felt myself a capitalist, for it is not the amount of wealth which gives one this proud feeling, it is the security of the capital which does that, and mine was absolutely secure, sewed up in three plies of my right-hand trousers' pocket, where I could test its security every hour of the day!

"To show you the sort of jobs I picked up, I will give you a brief sketch of one. It was at a little bit of a place. The farmer was anxious to get in his crop of potatoes as he was depending on them not only as food for his family, but also for barter with the store-keepers for clothing and other necessaries.

"The old farmer and I worked our level best at that job, for we knew—or rather he knew, since I was too new a chum to know it—that a sou'wester was at hand: and probably with its usual accompaniment of a deluge of rain which would not only end our digging operations but

so flood the fields that the rest of the crop would practically be lost. By strenuous exertions we got ahead of that southerly 'Buster!' but we had hardly gotten the last sackful safely into the barn, when the storm burst upon us with the peculiar snap and playful rush of the Australian rain. At first it takes an old hand to know whether it is only going to be a few scattering showers, hardly worth while to seek shelter from, or a storm that will take the country by the throat, tear up great trees by their roots, flood the flat land, scar the hills out of all remembered shape, so that one cannot recognize one's own familiar surroundings again, excepting by the brands on the poor bleached bodies of such of one's precious stock as had not managed to escape to places of safety.

"The farmer told me that that storm was the worst 'southerly buster' that had ever come his way, and he had been ten years in the country, and naturally had some experience of its little vagaries of climate.

"He and I did our best to save his stock, and for three days I performed the hardest, not to say the most dangerous, work I had ever done in my life. But when it was all over, and I had again to take to the road, or rather bush

—for Mathew Copeland's farm was pretty well beyond the sphere of roads—the thrifty 'cockatoo' never offered me a sixpence over the ten shillings which he had promised for the hard week's potato digging; although I had risked my life several times hauling his cattle and sheep out of flooded creeks!

"So I took my hook with small regret from Mathew Copeland's abode. His old woman did a little better than the old screw himself, for when her husband's back was turned she gave me a good sized damper, two nice packages of tea and sugar respectively, and an old billy to boil my tea; it had several holes which I had to plug with bits of rag, but it served my purpose, and I was thankful.

"Thus I departed from Copeland's, as the place continues to be called to this day, although the old man and woman went to their rest many a long year since. I still held my course towards the north-west. I cannot remember that I had any very definite purpose in my mind, but I know that I had some sort of a fixed idea that my destiny lay somewhere in this Never-Never land, and I knew well that I had not struck it yet.

CHAPTER VII

BAD CIRCUMSTANCES. GOOD RESOLUTIONS

"When I left Copeland's the creeks were still bank-to-bank full, and it was only my skill in fording burns in spate—a feat I had been trained to since childhood—which enabled me to get along at all. But it was slow work, and when my damper was quite finished, and my tea and sugar reduced to a last go or two, I struck such a big creek, or I should rather say *river*—that I considered it prudent to alter my course, and follow up the bank in hopes of finding human habitation, or at least a safe crossing.

"Since I had left the railway, and said farewell to Jim Sleeper six months before, I reckoned that I had tramped between three and four hundred miles. This was by no means bad travelling, when you take into account the fact that I had to work every other week, and sometimes more, to supply the needful for my tramping days. I never fell into the habit of the usual 'sun-downer,' which is to arrive at a station just at sunset—when even the most surly savage would hardly turn away a weary, hungry

man—and I am thankful to think that there are few owners or overseers in Australia who would refuse a feed, and a bit of sleeping space in the men's quarters, if a tramp asked properly. I may add that I have a comfortable hut at the Homestead and at all the out-stations on Blue Ridge, and no tramp is ever refused a night's lodging and a feed. I once vowed a vow, in one of my sore needs, that if ever I had the means in my power, no hungry tramp should under any circumstances be turned from door of mine, and the following are the circumstances under which I made that vow.

"I had left the creek to make a short cut, as I thought, to an upper bend, but it turned out to be a long cut, and nearly cost me my life. I quite lost the lay of the land, and travelled through dry blue gum scrub the whole day, without a drop of water or a bite in my mouth, excepting when in desperation I twisted some blue gum leaves into a quid, and chewed them slowly to cool my burning tongue. At last, when I was nearly giving up in despair, I emerged from that cursed scrub country, and across some green fields I saw a shanty, and a queer old-fashioned wind-mill, and knowing that here were human beings and water, I made straight for the house, quite regardless of

fences or crops—which of course was very wrong, but I was desperate and took no thought of what I might break or trample down. As I came near the wind-mill a man shouted at me, but I paid no heed whatever, but dashed at the sluice that caught the little trickle of water which the mill was still lifting from the well, though the light evening wind had hardly force enough to move the creaking old thing. Oh that life-giving draught! I verily believe that I might have died of repletion if that brutal cockatoo farmer had not sent me spinning head-over-heels by an awful blow on the back of the neck. I was so far gone that when I managed to pick myself up, I had no inclination to retaliate upon the scoundrel for his rascally conduct, and I sat down on a log trying to recover my scattered senses.

"The man then opened upon me with a torrent of abuse so foul that I cannot repeat it even in a modified form—and the gist of it all was 'to be gone! and never to put foot on his property again.'

"There was nothing for it but to depart, and this I slowly prepared to do with a heavy heart, sore head, and tired feet, when a woman (I once read in some book or other that there is

always a woman in the case, and God mercifully sent one into my case that day) came from the house, and, quite ignoring the man, handed me a parcel without saying a word, and pointed to a path through the fields, as if she were advising me to go that way, which I slowly did, devouring with a humble and grateful heart the damper and slices of pork, which the angel, in the form of a stout middle-aged woman, had given me!

"That was when I vowed that no human creature should ever be turned, with my knowledge, from door of mine. And although there seemed at that time little likelihood of me, a poor tramp, ever attaining to the dignity of owning a door, nevertheless I made the vow in all sincerity, and God has enabled me to keep it!

"Following the direction which the woman indicated, I had the great satisfaction of again striking the creek. Taking a hearty drink of its delicious, though muddy, waters, I slept the sleep of utter exhaustion, and woke up next morning much refreshed. That day I kept steadily up the creek in hopes of finding a crossing. The further I advanced I found the banks became wider apart, and in places the creek showed ripples, as if the water was be-

coming shallower, which gave me some hopes of finding a ford; but in this I was mistaken, the ripples which I supposed to be shallow water were in reality only indicative of a swifter current.

"As I plodded along, getting wearier and hungrier as the day advanced, suddenly I heard a horse neigh, then a dog barked, and in another minute I was in the midst of several men and horses. The men seemed excited, but whether their excitement was caused by my arrival or by some other cause I could not tell, nor did I much care at the moment, as my whole anxiety was to get a feed, for I was simply famishing, which I soon explained to them in a few forcible words!

"Given the means, the bush is the *beau-idéal* of free hospitality. Of course the day before I did not hold this opinion, but even in that extreme and exceptional experience there was 'a woman in the case,' who redeemed the man's brutality. The men I had now foregathered with soon set viands fit for a king before me. And that repast of damper, cold mutton, and hot tea marked an era in the journey of my life, and is almost as delicious in my memory now as it was delicious in my mouth that day.

"When I had consumed all I possibly could of the splendid banquet I rose from my knees —I had eaten in a kneeling posture, as being more convenient to reach the heavenly viands which were laid on nice green leaves spread on the ground—and shook hands all round very heartily and thankfully. After my own pressing necessities were so amply attended to, and I had time to pay some attention to my kind hosts, I found that there were six strong, good-looking men in the company, but I could not comprehend their business at all. I soon made them out to be of the intelligent sort, and by no means of the weary, heavy-eyed emigrant class, and they had no women with them, as settlers always have, poor creatures—I mean the women, not the settlers!

"They all seemed to have a gun apiece, and each man had a pistol in a neat leather case at his belt. At last I concluded that they were an exploring party, making a survey of the country. And so they were, but not exactly the sort of exploring party I had at first diagnosed them to be.

"One of the party, who seemed to be a leader, questioned me very closely as to where I had come from, whither I was bound, and whom

I had lately met. Feeling I had nothing particular to conceal, I answered all questions as clearly and truthfully as I could, which seemed to please the men, for they invited me to make their camp my home for the time being.

"Then to my great consternation, for I was a tender-hearted lad in those days, they told me that in crossing this stream the day before, one of their number had been swept away, together with his horse, which had gone mad with fear. The horse was drowned, but their comrade had managed to reach a little island a few yards square with some scrubby bushes on it, but how to rescue him was a problem which they had not yet solved! He was quite beyond the reach of words, and although they had some fine swimming horses, it was impossible to rescue the man by swimming out to him on horseback, for there were no spots where a horse, or even a man, could possibly land on the overhanging clay banks, for more than fifteen miles down stream, as they had proved by careful examination. It would be easy enough for a horse to take the water at the place where they had crossed the river the day before, as the banks were low and sloping. But if a man and horse were clever enough to reach the island, and get

hold of their marooned companion, it would be impossible for the strongest swimmer—horse or man—to swim back to the landing against the swift current. So there would be no alternative but to seek a landing down stream. And the men declared emphatically that there was no chance of effecting a landing for more than fifteen miles, and the best horse would lose courage in such a swim, and drown.

"When I expressed surprise that none of them had tried to swim over to their friend, and endeavour to arrange some mode of rescue, as no doubt their comrade had become somewhat weak by want of food, and perhaps wounds, they rather shamefacedly confessed that none of them had ever learned the invaluable accomplishment of substituting their arms and legs for fins; and their friend who was now marooned on the dot of land in the middle of the muddy flood was as helpless as themselves in that respect. These facts seemed to me incredible. But the men's explanation was that they all belonged to an inland parish with no suitable swimming places, and when in childhood they were taken to the sea-shore for a holiday, they merely paddled about with bare feet and legs, but they never had a swimming lesson in their

lives, and like so many others, they never realized the necessity of learning the art until it was too late. Not one grown-up man in a thousand ever acquires the art, some may be able to struggle a few yards, but it can no more be called swimming than a child's erratic marks on a slate can be called writing.

"I had learned to swim almost as soon as I had learned to walk, and crossing the burns when they were in spate was an achievement which all the boys in the Glen learned as a matter of course. And realizing that here was an opportunity to put my accomplishment into useful practice, I at once set about thinking out some plan of rescuing the marooned man. The poor fellow had now been some thirty hours without food, and although we could sometimes see him moving slowly about the island, but never attempting to take to the water, we knew his case was desperate unless means of rescue were at once devised by us.

"Youth soon recuperates from a strain such as I had lately gone through, and after my splendid feed, and a couple of hours of what Wordsworth calls

The sleep that is among the lonely hills

I felt as fit as a three-year-old.

"The flood showed no signs of subsiding, so we knew that if anything was to be done for the man in peril, it had to be done promptly. In my youthful exuberance of feeling I became so excited over the terrible fate of the man who was slowing perishing within sight, and almost within speaking distance, of his comrades, that I offered to try my best at a rescue, if they promised to do their part as I directed.

"My plan was to take to the water myself at any favourable spot two or three miles above the island. I reckoned that that distance would give me ample time to get into the latitude of the island before the current carried me past. Then when I reached the man I hoped to find him still *compos mentis* enough to hold on to my belt and let me tow him quietly to the river bank, when it would rest with the men to act promptly and judiciously to get us out of the water, and hoist us up the river bank by carefully arranged tether ropes.

"No sooner was my plan explained than it was unanimously adopted. I have often noticed how easily men are persuaded into some course of action if that course relieves them of a heavy responsibility, and shifts the onerous duty on to the other fellow!

"I need only say that my plan succeeded admirably. By starting some two miles up stream I got in a line with the island in ample time, and when I reached it I found the landing on the west side—which was the side we had not been able to see from our bank—quite low, and a good landing place. The marooned man saw me coming, and he told me afterwards that he thought I was a derelict from somewhere up stream. He knew that all his mates were non-swimmers like himself, and would drown like babies if they were chucked into water, though they were heroes of strength and courage otherwise.

"When I scrambled on to the little muddy island, my only scrap of what might be called clothing was my belt. It was a strong leather concern which a sailor made me a present of on the old *Isle of Bute*, in admiration of the way I had polished off Bill Bleach. I only mention my belt because I knew when I started out on the rescue of the marooned man that if I were to be successful in saving him my belt would play a prominent part, as that was the only safe hold he could take of me without impeding my movements. I had seen strong men throttled to death by drowning men clasping

them madly round the neck. Therefore I went cautiously about this rather dangerous job which I had so chivalrously, or perhaps I should say foolishly, undertaken.

"When I had recovered myself a bit after my long, though easy, paddle down stream, I found the man whom I had come to rescue, a tall gentlemanly looking fellow, still young and lithe in appearance, but beginning to show some signs of middle age. After helping me through the mud and on to solid ground, he naturally asked me where I had come from, and why I had come!

"I was astonished to find the man in such good case as he was. He had hardly more clothing than I had, but he did not seem to suffer on that account. He had one article of clothing only, and that he had arranged as a most effective head-dress. It was one of those nice old-fashioned stockings which the Irish and Scotch women knit, and which are almost everlasting wear. I suppose I must have smiled a little, for in a moment the man knew what had tickled my risibility, and smiling rather sadly, he pulled it off, and showed me its quaint pattern and wonderful elasticity, and said, as he held it tenderly in his hands:

"'When I landed here after my poor horse was drowned, I had lost every scrap of clothing save this. And as the pair were knitted by an old and very dear friend, I thought it would be more honourable to wear the last one as a head-dress in memory of one I shall no more see in this world.'

"I felt inclined to laugh at the man's comical appearance, as he solemnly replaced his funny turban, but I also felt inclined to cry at his pathetic words, so I did neither.

"It was still late summer, and no one mentioned cold, though many growled at the heat. But this man had been thirty hours without a morsel of food, and he must have been a man of an iron constitution to have gone through all he had, and still to look as fit as he did, naked as he was, for hunger always induces cold. His friends on shore thought of his hungry plight, and asked me if I could carry a little parcel of damper and mutton securely fastened on my head. This I felt quite able to do, and did not feel at all incommoded by the little bundle when I started. But unfortunately I lost it in a whirlpool which sucked me under for a few moments.

"I told the man this, and at the same time said that I had come at the request of his friends

to try to rescue him from his bad plight, as his friends had told me that—like themselves—he could not swim. When I said this, the man looked at me very hard for a minute or two, and then he burst out into a laugh, and cried:

"'Oh-ho, my clever young friend! You don't seem to have any concealed weapons about you. If I thought you had I would simply break your back across my knee, and chuck your tender body as a delicious morsel to the eels and platypus, of which there are great abundance in these Stygian waters.'

"I stared at the fellow in blank amazement, thinking that perhaps his sufferings had driven him mad! We must have made a strange picture had any one been there to see two naked men sitting on the bare, muddy earth, looking grimly at each other as if they meant mischief instead of good. Then it came into my mind that there was some mystery about this man, and about his friends over yonder, which I had not fathomed yet! And I began to overhaul some secret advice and talismanic words which the leader of the squad on the river bank had impressed upon me that I must repeat if the man I was trying to rescue doubted me in any way. So here was doubt with a vengeance, and

I must say that I was very much disappointed! But we are always meeting with some sort of disappointment, and I just braced myself to face the issue.

"Fortunately I have a very retentive memory, and I had the words on my tongue after a moment's reflection. Looking the man straight in the eyes quite calmly, I said slowly and distinctly:

"'We few!'

"A strange sort of amazement came into his face, as he replied in an incredulous tone of voice:

"'We happy few!'

"Then I felt reassured, and I held out my hand in a hearty, friendly, free manner, and cried:

"'We band of brothers!'

"In a moment we both jumped to our feet, and if there had been anybody there to see they would have gone into fits at the spectacle of two grown-up, naked, dirty men embracing lovingly like two silly little three-year-old kids! But there was nobody on hand to enjoy the demonstration of affection, saving a gang of mud-bedraggled cockatoos, but even they chattered and screamed, evidently greatly amused at the incongruous display.

"It did not take many minutes to explain to my new-found friend the method I had planned to tow him across the river. There was, in fact, nothing for him to do but to keep alongside of me, holding on to my belt as lightly as he could, and impeding my movements as little as possible. It did not take long for two men who were practically fearless, although one was absolutely helpless in deep water, to arrange their start. Fortunately the water was by no means cold—it had been warmed by overflowing many sun-scorched shingle-beds in its flooded course. And although this process had not improved its drinking quality, it certainly had made it more comfortable for a long swim in its half-tepid waters.

"We practised our arrangements and mode of progress before we finally cast off from the island. When we thought that we understood our plans thoroughly, I let go the bushes, and we went slowly along to the lower end of the island. Here I took advantage of the slack water to paddle a little nearer to the bank we wished to reach, at the same time splashing all I knew how, to attract the attention of our friends on shore, whose assistance I knew we must have in landing on those formidable

twenty-feet perpendicular clay banks, if we were ever lucky enough to reach land at all through the swirling eddies and whirlpools and general *débris* in the muddy, rushing river.

"When we got through the slack water, and met the full force of the current, we were swept along at a great rate, and I was much relieved when my companion whispered, 'They see us!' for I had feared that we might escape even their eager watch, as we were mixed up with all sorts of wreckage stuff which had come down the flood for miles and miles.

"Thus we went drifting down the muddy stream for two mortal hours—so they of the shore timed us—with no sustenance whatever save a sip now and then of the reddish, thickish water about the consistency of the soup sailors call skilligalee. And maybe that skilly was what sustained us in our severe tug and struggle that day; for I have learned since then that there are tribes of people who use certain kinds of earth, not only as medicine, but occasionally as an article of diet.

"That tug through *débris*, and all sorts of whirlpools and cross-currents, was a strain such as I never went through before or since, and when you consider that I was not only keeping

a man afloat, but towing him along to reach the bank before we should become exhausted and go under, you can imagine that I must have been a pretty stout lad, as well as a good swimmer, in those days.

"After we had been carried down stream some fifteen miles or so (as I learned afterwards) the high banks ceased, and the land became low and swampy. We both noticed this good change, and my companion whispered some hopeful words, and actually made some fair attempts with his disengaged hand to assist our progress. This change in the river banks made it possible for our friends on shore to ride close to the river, which they did, constantly making signals to us which cheered us up wonderfully, and put fresh courage into our drooping hearts. At last we heard shouts, and after a while we touched bottom. Two fellows on horseback dashed out from the shore, but before they reached us their horses were swimming. However, they threw us their tether ropes, and in a minute we were hauled to dry land and safety! But we were pretty weak men for three or four days thereafter, and did little else than eat and sleep, and, I hope, thank God for our escape from 'the eels and the platypus.'

CHAPTER VIII

CHOICE OF LIFE OR DEATH

"During those quiet days of recuperation I learned the name and part of the history of the man whom I had been the means of saving either from drowning or starvation.

"Lawrence Murphy was an Irishman of good family. But what with horses, much gaiety, law, and politics, he had been brought so low that instead of shooting pheasants on what was once his own land, he had taken to the more lucrative business of trapping birds and catching fish on his neighbours' estates, with the result that he was sent to Australia at the Queen's expense, to try if life under the Southern Cross would conduce to improve his morals. But, alas, however much or far we change our domicile in the world, it does not follow that we change our idiosyncrasies at the same time —that is another and more difficult process altogether, and quite beyond the reach of judge and jury. So when Lawrence Murphy was dumped on to Australian soil—along with three hundred other *convicts*—he was just 'Gentleman

Lawrence the poacher,' with seven years against his name in the Register Book, and nobody cared a jot one way or the other. Oh, yes, I forgot! There were a weeping woman and a broken-hearted old gentleman in County Down who cared very much.

"Of course on board ship there were many opportunities of forming acquaintances, and, as everywhere else, like naturally drifts to like. In this way Murphy formed friendships with the six men who now composed his present squad. Before they scattered from the ship they all swore to a verbal agreement to keep within hail of each other as much as possible, and if possible to be allocated to settlers in the same part of the country. As they were all *gentlemen*, and by no means inclined to coarse crimes and insubordination, they bore excellent characters on board ship, and when they arrived in Sydney they had no difficulty in finding masters in the same section of the country, even although in some cases a good many miles apart.

"Lawrence Murphy and two of his friends were lucky enough to be allotted to the same master, and served out their terms and received an honourable discharge, with good marks. This was their opportunity, the parting of the

ways, which so many bright spirits miss. After picking up their four friends who still had some years to serve (but escape was comparatively easy in those days of sparse population), these seven men took to the bush, and the six of them swore on the Cross to be faithful and true to their leader, Lawrence Murphy, in life and in death.

"That is a brief synopsis of the gang I had foregathered with; a gang which had treated me kindly, and to which I had returned service to the best of my ability. The man I had rescued from the island made a strong appeal to induce me to cast in my lot with them. They did not call themselves 'bushrangers,' but that was practically what they were, though they styled themselves by the less dangerous appellation of 'drovers.' This business was moving herds of cattle or mobs of horses from one part of the country to another for a stipulated sum per head of those they delivered in good order. And as a rule runholders found it to their advantage to engage Murphy and his men, for if a runholder sent a mob of cattle or horses under charge of his own men—and even if he went along himself—the chances were that many of the best animals were mysteriously lost in some

hard bit of bush country, and never heard of again. Whereas if Murphy and his men had charge of a mob they invariably got through the longest journeys with never the loss of a beast! It must have been a very lucrative business, for the squad were splendidly mounted, most comfortably clothed, and all their appointments were first class.

"Lawrence Murphy, and indeed all the party, treated me most kindly. They gave me a complete new outfit, which I badly needed, and, in short, made me perfectly at home and promised that if I stayed with them I should share and share alike with the rest. But something saved me at this parting of the ways of life! I don't know what it was, but I know that it was something beyond my wisdom, or understanding, for to me, a lonely youngster, the inducements proffered seemed too good to be refused. When I reflect upon the circumstance now, I think that somehow it must have been my father's prayers. Otherwise it seems unaccountable how a friendless, penniless youth, in the dismal Australian wilderness, helpless and alone, could have resisted such a generous offer, made by men who I instinctively knew were gentlemen, and who would keep their promise when once

given. When I look back upon that day, with all my acquired knowledge of life, and its hardships, I cannot understand how I had strength to refuse friendship, ease, and jollity, and start again upon my trudging, lonely life in that awful endless bush—save upon the supposition that my father's prayers were heard in heaven, and the answer sent direct to his son in his hour of need!

"When Murphy saw that I was bound to go my 'ain gate,' he gave me a nice horse with bridle, saddle, and tether rope complete. But I instinctively knew that it would not be good for an unknown young man to be met well mounted, and well clad, hundreds of miles from civilization, unless I belonged to one of the few stations in that part of the country. When I expressed these views to Murphy, he smiled rather sadly, and said:

"'You are a careful as well as a brave lad, James Melville, and I like you the better for it. And if ever I can be of service to you, in my humble capacity of "drover," remember that Lawrence Murphy is your friend, as you generously proved yourself to be his at the imminent risk of your life. Never forget our pass-words, and if ever you are in a tight place, and should

ask help from me, I will grant your request if it is within reach of my mortal power.'

"After I had been with Murphy and his men for a week or so, in telling them of my adventures in my tramp up country I of course related with emphasis how badly I had been treated by a man whom I described. And I added that I certainly should have died then and there, had not an angel, in the form of a stoutish lady, given me food and set me on my way. As I told the men how abominably I had been used, and cursed as well, by this brutal fellow, the leader, addressing his men, said:

"'Now, this must be put a stop to! "Bloody Jack" must be taught better manners. We gave him one lesson which I thought would be enough, but it seems that one admonition, however severe, is not sufficient for some men, so we will give this man the "choice." We have cured several by this method, as you all know. Our last case was Bendigo Bill, over Queensland way. Of course some may think he "chose" the wrong way for himself, but after all it was no doubt the right way for such a callous brute who was guilty of so many atrocious crimes—the last being the flogging of his poor wife to death, in which we caught him

red-handed! There is no use keeping such monsters in this world if the Lord will take them, and deal with them elsewhere. But if by this trial of "choice" God so orders that they remain on earth a little longer, no doubt He knows better than we with our erring judgement, and so directs the "choice." You all learned these things from the "Banshee Folk" in the dear old land! But this young man, who has suffered at the hands of "Bloody Jack," must see this ordeal properly carried out.

"'Three of you ride over, and bring this man into camp, but be careful, for he always carries arms. Our young friend will go with you so that there may be no possibility of mistake, for it is some two years since we last saw him: that was when we flogged him for beating his wife. It was a severe lesson, but his neighbours say it cured him of that trick. Now, by God's grace, we must teach the rascal to behave more like a human being than a wild beast to "the poor, and him that hath no helper," as good old Father Flannagan used to impress upon our hearts, and *backs*, with his stout thorn stick, when he caught us boys playing tricks upon poor Danny Macvane, the village idiot.'

"We set off at once, and as the 'lesson' is the

important part, I will skip over the little episode of securing this man—Jack Kean, as I learned his proper name was—and bringing him into camp tied securely on his own horse which was led by one of us turn and turn about. The fellow hardly said a word after he was secured, although he cursed and fought viciously during the process of securing him. But thereafter he maintained a dour silence until our arrival in camp.

"We travelled rather slowly, as a matter of course, but we made up for it by only camping once for half an hour to boil a billy of tea, and have a hurried snack of damper therewith. When night came on we had reached the open bush country, and with fine clear moonlight we managed to get on well enough, and reached camp shortly after daylight. We were in the nick of time to find our people at breakfast, to which we did bush justice, even the gloomy prisoner readily devouring everything that was set before him.

"After breakfast and a short rest, Lawrence Murphy called us together to the trial of 'Bloody Jack,' as the man was usually called on account of his atrocious language. When some of Murphy's band had given several instances

of Kean's misdeeds, I was called upon to give my evidence. I made my story as mild as possible, for by the demeanour of Murphy and the others I began to realize that the ending of this trial was not going to be a joke and a picnic, but, on the contrary, deadly tragedy and trouble. But although it was a stern, yet I must say it was a fair, trial. Any little favourable point in the accused man's favour was made the most of; still the evidence was so overwhelmingly against him that everybody knew what the verdict would be long before the jury of four men—who had taken no part in the trial save listening to the evidence—pronounced the fatal word 'guilty.' That trial of Jack Kean was certainly a strange affair, but when I reflect upon it now, I must say that I never saw a case conducted in a fairer or less biased spirit.

"When the man was pronounced guilty, Murphy asked him if he had anything to say in his own defence. But the fellow only scowled upon the whole company, and administered a cruel kick to his poor mongrel dog, which had followed him faithfully, and licked his hands lovingly many times during that eventful day, as though the creature knew that his master was in some sore trouble.

"After a few minutes' pause, as if to give the prisoner time to arrange his defence—but he made no answer whatever—Murphy stood up, and said:

"'Jack Kean! You have again been found guilty by a jury of your own countrymen. The last time you were convicted by this court your punishment was made as light as consistent with justice, on the urgent and piteous petition of your wife. To-day there is no one here to intervene between you and justice; so your only hope is in the leniency of this court, and the mercy of God! But you have provoked God so often and so outrageously, that one feels somewhat diffident about recommending you to His clemency.

"'The decision of the court is this. On a plate two small sandwiches exactly alike in appearance will be presented to you. One will be perfectly wholesome, one will contain a portion of strychnine sufficient to cause death within an hour. You must choose and eat one of these sandwiches while two men hold pistols to your head to shoot you dead if you try to play false. If this ordeal is too hard for you, then you will be taken to the stringy-bark yonder, and there hanged by the neck until you

are dead. And may God have mercy on your soul!'

"This bit of legal benediction seemed to relieve the tension on all our minds, and we stood up and heaved a sort of sigh of relief, as though we had been suddenly eased from bodily pain. Murphy quietly waited awhile, no doubt to give Kean time to make his decision, and then he said, 'Have you made your choice?'

"'Yes! the sandwich,' answered the man, in such a cheerful voice that it at once flashed through my mind that he thought Murphy and his men were only playing a game to frighten him.

"Quite calmly and deliberately Murphy picked up a tin plate, such as all bushmen use, and took from his coat pocket two tiny, nice-looking sandwiches, just large enough for each one to make a comfortable mouthful. Carefully removing the morsels from their wrappings of leaves he laid them side by side on the plate, and held the dish out to Kean with an air as if he were helping a guest at an ordinary dinner table, while two men at that instant stepped to each side of the man, with revolvers in their hands.

"Without the slightest hesitation Kean picked up one of the nice bits of bread and meat,

chewed it for a few seconds, and swallowed it with great deliberation, then washed it down with a long swill of tea. When this performance was accomplished to Murphy's satisfaction, he laid the remaining sandwich before Kean's poor hungry cur. In a moment the brute gobbled it up, and with gleaming eyes looked for more of such delicious morsels.

"The dog was chained to a stump a few yards from where his master was held by a tether rope between two of our men, while the rest of us sat around on stumps and logs, silent as regarded words, but with wildly beating hearts, and eyes that watched dog and man with a dreadful intentness.

"Bloody Jack himself seemed to be the least interested man among us, and after awhile he laughed, saying something about 'the joke being played out.' But he did not laugh any more while he was in our company. He had hardly said the words, when his dog gave a whining bark, or rather cry, and threw himself flat on his side with quivering stiff limbs, and wildly glaring, but unobservant, glassy eyes.

"Bushmen in those days knew well the manifestations of strychnine poisoning, as all settlers used the drug to destroy the hordes of dingos,

which caused heaps of trouble among sheep and young calves, when the country was first settled.

"Kean struggled to his feet in spite of the men who held him by his bound arms—then he made a step or two towards his dying dog, and, uttering a wild cry, dropped on his knees, and fell into a paroxysm of passionate speech that seemed a commingling of blasphemy and prayer, and which at the moment I thought was the raving of a man who had gone mad through strain and stress of mind, although he had carried himself nonchalantly enough that morning to all outward appearance.

"The poor dog was soon out of his misery, and after Kean had convinced himself that his only friend was beyond all earthly help, he turned to Murphy and asked if he might now depart, adding very humbly, 'as my poor dog has drawn the losing number.'

"'Yes,' said Murphy, 'you may now go, Jack Kean! But remember that the next time you are brought before me, if you have not mended your ways, you will not have a *choice*: there will only be *one* sandwich presented to you on the plate.'

"The man said not a word. When he was

released he very quietly saddled his horse, coiled up his tether rope on the beast's neck—colonial fashion—and packed his dead cur behind the saddle; then he mounted, and to the astonishment of us all respectfully doffed his battered old wide-a-wake to Murphy, and without a word rode silently into the forest.

"I am glad to be able to report, before I quit this tragic incident, that from that time forth Jack Kean, *alias* Bloody Jack, became a completely changed man, not only in his home life, but also in his general behaviour abroad. When a poor weary swagger happened along he was at the least given a feed in place of a curse and a kick, as in the former days. And when the parson came that way on a missionary tour, Kean gradually became one of his most staunch supporters, instead of being a trouble and nuisance to every decent person in the district.

"After I settled on Blue Ridge Station I frequently spent a night at Kean's as I passed down with a load of wool, or back with a load of station stores. At such times he and the wife (who I think knew all about the 'choice' ordeal) always treated me in the kindest way. And when at last—during the great drought—I told him that Lawrence Murphy and all his gang

had gone to California, he looked at me quite steadily, and said with a sad sort of note in his voice:

"'Ah well, Mr. Melville. You and I and the Missus here know that the country lost seven good men when Lawrence Murphy and his comrades said good-bye to Australia!'

"Strange to say, Larry Murphy and his men were the only bushrangers I ever had much to do with in my long colonial experience. And I must say that I did not find them by any means such a wicked lot as bushrangers are generally made out to be. After all is said and done, when one looks at the matter dispassionately, one cannot blame bushrangers very severely for doing *without* law, and with much risk and discomfort to themselves, what the Radicals are always trying to do under *protection* of law, and at no risk or discomfort to themselves.

"During the few weeks I fraternized with the Murphy gang I had picked up much information about the country in general. And among the rest was an account of a large station some hundred miles further west. This fired my ambition, and I determined to strike westward until I found what Larry Murphy described as the largest station in New South Wales.

"Murphy and the others would have loaded me with grub enough to last me a year, if I could have carried it all, but I had to content myself with a handy swag of the lightest kinds of tack, enough I thought to carry me for a fortnight, and in that time I hoped to reach the station Murphy had told me about.

"You may hardly believe me, but it is true all the same, that when it came to the parting with Larry and the others, it was quite a touching incident. And I frequently found myself pondering whether it were wise to refuse Murphy's generous offer of a free partnership in his company. But here again I must conclude that my dear father's prayers saved me from a false step. For it would have been a false step for *me*, although it is hard to say that it was a false step for a lot of high-spirited Irishmen who had been branded as felons for the boyish freaks of catching a trout, snaring a pheasant, or robbing an orchard at odd times. Besides, you must remember that it is very hard for a Celt to obey Sassenach laws, just as it is impossible for a South Sea Islander to understand the white man's code of justice. If poor Fuzzy-Wuzzy's father, mother, friend, or whatnot is done to death by a white man, he does not

weary his life out hunting for the exact criminal, but kills the first man of the offending race whom he happens to meet, and thereby avenges the dead, and eases his own soul! We are too apt to call this prompt expiation 'savagery.' But to Fuzzy-Wuzzy's conscience there is no savagery about it! it is a gallant deed of justice, and the whole community applaud his courage and love. No doubt it greatly depends upon how one is brought up. Murphy used to maintain that the only difference between his countrymen and mine was the fact that mine have a preponderance of caution! *Quien sabe?*

"The last night I spent with Murphy and his men, we had a lively time of talk and song and much hilarity. Like most Irishmen, they could all sing a good song, and here is one that Lawrence Murphy sang. There isn't much in it, but it touched me deeply that night, and I got him to sing it over and over until I had the words and the sweet old Irish air securely fixed in my memory. I often sing it to myself yet on a lonely bush journey. And I would rather hear Murphy troll it forth with his rich Irish brogue, and his comrades give the chorus with full musical swing, than I would listen to the sweet-

est madrigal that ever *prima-donna* bewitched men with.

LAWRENCE MURPHY'S SONG

Let us sing to the land of the shamrock,
To Erin, the land of the green;
To the land of the throstle and laverock,
The fairest men ever have seen!

O it 's here 's to the shamrock and heather,
And it 's here 's to the daisies and whins;
And it 's here 's to the darlint ould Father!
Who blest us, and prayed for our sins.

Ah God! the soft rain of Killarney,
And the mist with the sun shining through;
Oh the reel, and the kiss, and the blarney,
And the hearts that were honest and true!

O it 's here 's to the shamrock and heather,
And it 's here 's to the daisies and whins;
And it 's here 's to the darlint ould Father!
Who blest us, and prayed for our sins.

Oh the pheasant and trout from his Lordship,
Who be-dad! never missed them at all!
Ah the cracking shillelaghs like swordship,
And the spalpeens we sent to a fall!

O it 's here 's to the shamrock and heather,
And it 's here 's to the daisies and whins
And it 's here 's to the darlint ould Father!
Who blest us, and prayed for our sins.

And it's oh for the lads and the lasses
We left o'er the weary saut sea;
May the wind bear a kiss as it passes
To the sweet lips we'll never more pree!

O it's here's to the shamrock and heather,
And it's here's to the daisies and whins;
And it's here's to the darlint ould Father!
Who blest us, and prayed for our sins.

O Erin, where skies are the bluest,
Dear land where our forefathers sleep,
Where women and men are the truest—
The land that we dream of and weep!

And it's here's to the shamrock and heather,
And it's here's to the daisies and whins;
And it's here's to the darlint ould Father!
Who blest us, and prayed for our sins.

CHAPTER IX

"WE FEW! WE HAPPY FEW! WE BAND OF BROTHERS!"

"I SHALL pass over my next tramp without entering into details. Suffice it to say that the little fowling-piece which Murphy gave me at parting, with a supply of powder, shot, and caps —breech-loaders were not used in those days —saved me from starvation. My stock of pro-

visions petered out long before I reached the station I was in search of, and I often longed for the horse which Murphy wished me to take. He knew all about the bush, and feared, no doubt, that I should become exhausted and perish unless I had a horse to carry me. I have often thought since then that Larry Murphy must have had a kind soft heart in spite of his radical and socialistic mode of life.

"After a weary tramp of about a month, one evening towards sunset I walked slowly and wearily up to the door of this very house, which looked then much as it does now, only there are more trees and cultivation about the place than there were in those days.

"When I made a noise on the veranda, a young man came out and looked at me. He was little older than myself, but not much, and he was in those days 'Timothy Maxwell, Esquire, J.P., owner of Blue Ridge Station.' Now he is plain Maxwell, whom you know as overseer of the Farm. This young gentleman looked me all over sharply, and said:

"'Well, young man! I suppose you are a specimen of the genus sun-downer. But we see so few of that species out our way that perhaps I am mistaken.'

"'No, sir,' I retorted, 'I am not a sun-downer, I am a *man*, and I am looking for work!'

"At this he smiled, and examined me more carefully, saying half to himself and half to me:

"'Yes! that's what they all say, but it is astonishing how few find it, although there is plenty of that commodity lying about all over the country. The fact is that ninety-nine out of every hundred of the travelling fraternity are like the brave nigger who was so little afraid of work that he protested he could 'lie down and go to sleep beside um!' But I'll tell you what I will do, as you look to be a new chum and honest—but of course I may be mistaken—you can live at the men's quarters over yonder for a couple of days just to recover from this looking business, in which you tell me that you have been engaged lately! In the meantime I will show you a new paddock fence which we are putting up. I am short of men on that job, and if you like to tackle the work, and if you do it properly, I will allow you eight shillings a day. So if you are a 'man,' as you have impressed upon me, you ought to be supremely happy, for you will have realized the Radical's dream of blessedness:

Eight hours' work,
Eight hours' play,
Eight hours' sleep,
Eight bob a day!

"Then the young gentleman took out his note-book, scribbled something, tore out the leaf, and, handing it to me, told me to give it to the cook at the men's quarters. Thanking him quietly, I betook myself to the place indicated. On the way I looked at the paper, and found, 'Give the bearer a bed, and full rations until further orders. T. M.'

"That was my *début* on this station, the place which became my first and last permanent domicile in Australia. I soon learned that 'T. M.' stood for 'Timothy Maxwell,' owner and manager of 'Blue Ridge.' He was a very young man to have control of such a huge station. But even in those early days Maxwell possessed a great deal of good judgement, and a large portion of that invaluable commodity, common sense.

"There were forty thousand sheep, and four or five thousand head of cattle, on the Run even in its rough state in those days. And there were from seventy to eighty men constantly employed about the place. Maxwell's father, who was in

business in Sydney, and was reported to be very wealthy—which I have no doubt he was at that time—had established his son on Blue Ridge. At the time I refer to, it was a splendid property and a most profitable investment, although still in its rough, wild state, with few improvements, and, like all the rest of the country, liable to suffer from drought.

"The greatest expense and drawback to the station at that time was its great distance from railway, or dependable water carriage. So everything from or to the station had to be carried by the slow old-fashioned bullock-dray, and, as you may imagine, a weary, hard, dangerous business it was. As Maxwell found out by degrees that I was trustworthy, diligent, and a careful, hard worker—as he was pleased to term it—and with ambition far beyond the 'Radical's dream of blessedness,' he made me head of this arduous department. Of course it was a good position, and high pay for a lad of my age, but many a time when in some hard fix, with half-starved bullocks, half-a-dozen drays stuck in swampy ground, and tired men swearing like troopers, I have sincerely wished that Maxwell had given me a shepherd's billet, where I would have had a quiet life, with the peaceful companion-

ship of my dog and my flock, and sweet rests under the golden wattle, calmly studying my precious 'chap-books'—little treasures which I had managed to save through all my adventures, and which I have managed to keep to this day! But once, after my return from a particularly hard trip, when I mentioned to Maxwell my predilection for the shepherd vocation, he only laughed, saying that my talents would be wasted at shepherding, and that I would never *get on* unless I tried to climb up, no matter how disagreeable the job might be! That is the stock argument of the world, but Maxwell is not nearly so stiff on the subject as he used to be. However, he got me to stick to my job, and we often laugh over it even yet.

"Of course it showed great confidence on Maxwell's part, for I had only been one year in his employ when he put me in charge of this important department. I had to use my own judgement in every detail of the business, and considering that thousands of pounds' worth of property would be under my charge year in and year out, besides hundreds of pounds in silver, which I had to bring up at shearing time—it certainly showed that my employer had great confidence in a young man who had come to him

only a short time before in the form of a tramp. But Tim Maxwell is, and generally has been, a shrewd man. I have only known him to make one huge error, and it was the mistake of his life as far as wealth is concerned. But, after all, wealth does not count very much one way or the other on the balance sheet of happiness or unhappiness in this world. And according to Christ it rather militates against our prospects in the next. But that does not seem to make it the less sought after. So we must just call that huge error the mistake of Tim's life as far as wealth is concerned, and leave it at that.

"I think I have mentioned that I have had very little trouble from the bushranger fraternity. But we knew from reports that there were gangs in the country, and we always had plenty of firearms at the Home Stations in case we should be honoured by a visit from some of these undesirable visitors. I had also taken the precaution to provide my bullock-drivers with pistols, and stout knives, in case of need. A few months after I took up the business of draying, a gang had made a raid on a neighbour's drays returning from Sydney with a load of goods, and not only helped themselves to all they required in the saddlery, clothing, and provision line, but

these light-fingered radical gentlemen had secured two hundred pounds in cash which was being brought up for station use. The bullock-drivers had cunningly put the little canvas bags of silver coin into some sacks of oats which they were taking along to give their stock a hasty feed, instead of making long delays for the poor beasts to pick up a meal from the scanty herbage.

"When the bushrangers had overhauled the goods, and had taken toll of all they thought worth taking, they sat down to have a comfortable feed of damper, cold mutton, and tea, at the same time giving the horses a feed from one of the sacks of oats. In opening the sacks, of course, they discovered, like Joseph's brethren, the money 'in the sack's mouth,' but *unlike* the terrified sons of Jacob, they were highly delighted, and promptly annexed the shekels. I often wondered who were the men who made this lucky find. But remembering my late friends of the bush, I forbore to press inquiries too closely.

"A few months after I had been installed as chief of the draying department, I returned a few days sooner than I was expected from a trip to the railway station. Having seen my men

and bullocks past all the bad parts of the way, I had left my head driver in charge, and had ridden ahead of the slow-moving drays. When I approached this house—which was the Homestead in those days—I was a bit startled at the silence prevailing about the place, and by seeing a number of saddled horses in the stockyard, which I saw at a glance were not ours.

"I rode up to the house at a canter, swung off my horse, and, hooking the bridle to the rail, went into this very room, which was then used as office and library—Maxwell was always a great reader, and his father used to send him many consignments of books. There was a large safe in one corner, where Maxwell was accustomed to keep a good deal of money when shearing and other accounts were about due.

"At the door of this room stood the very man—with a six-shooter in his hand—who gave me the pass-words when I started to rescue Lawrence Murphy! The poor chap knew me at once, and looked at me with a very shamefaced expression, and, as I live, blushed up to the roots of his hair, like a girl! I made a movement to pass him, but he shook his head, and barred me with his outstretched hand—not the hand with the pistol—and then King Henry's

words, which I had not repeated for years, leapt to my tongue!

"'We few,' and the man instantly responded, 'We happy few,' and dropped his hand, and I whispered, as I passed into the room, 'We band of brothers!'

"I found a tragic scene when I entered the room. Lawrence Murphy was standing on one side of the safe, and Maxwell on the other side. Murphy had a fierce gleam in his eyes, and he was saying:

"'Open the safe, Mr. Maxwell! or—' and he levelled a cocked pistol at Maxwell's face.

"Two quick steps took me to Larry's side, and I quickly pushed his pistol-hand up, and at that instant the weapon went off, and yonder is the splintered wood where the bullet is sticking to this day.

"Maxwell is a brave man, as I have proved many a time, but he turned a bit whitish as he heard the bullet strike and saw the wood splinter. It was certainly a close shave, if Murphy really meant to fire when he levelled the pistol at Maxwell! But I don't think he did. And he told me afterwards that he had no intention of shooting anybody; he only wished to frighten Maxwell or his book-keeper into open-

ing the safe, as they were the only ones who understood the combination which would open the safe.

"As I held Murphy's arm, and looked into his eyes, I saw that he did not recognize me, and he made a motion to wrench his arm free from my grip. Then I repeated his own passwords, whispering in his ear, so that others might not hear, 'We few!' and he looked at me in a dazed sort of way, and made answer in an incredulous, low tone of voice,

"'We happy few!' And instantly I rapped out, looking straight in his eyes, 'We band of brothers!' Then Murphy stood quite motionless, and silent, while I whispered:

"'Remember your promise. Grant it now! Spare this station! Get your men together outside, while I arrange matters with Maxwell.'

"Larry thrust his pistol into the case at his side, and stalked out of the room, and I pulled Maxwell into a corner, and hurriedly said that I could get rid of the bushrangers if he allowed me a free hand and waited for the explanation afterwards.

"Long before this, Maxwell and I had learned that hard but important lesson, namely, to trust each other; so he only nodded, and I went out

after Larry and his comrades. I found them all at the stockyard, coolly giving their horses a fine free feed from the bins of oats in our stable.

"I now spoke quite freely to the whole gang, for they had all remembered and recognized me by this time. They crowded round Murphy and me, while he gave me a brief account of their wanderings since we parted, after I had refused their generous offer of a full partnership. They all seemed somewhat depressed, and in a disjointed sort of way they told me of a bad tussle they had had up Queensland way, and they were afraid that some of the hands on the station got *hurt* through foolishly interfering in what would only have been the asking and giving a little assistance to poor hungry coves, who never wished to do harm to any man, woman, or child, etc.

"After this revelation there was an embarrassed silence for a few minutes. Murphy was the first to take up the thread of discourse, and I was glad to note in a more cheerful vein. Said he:

"'We have unanimously decided to get out of the country. We cannot go back to the Old Land, that would only be out of the frying-pan into the fire. Therefore we intend to find our

way to California, turn over a new leaf, and make an honest living at gold-digging. We planned this some time ago, but to carry out this plan we required about two hundred pounds to pay for passages from Newcastle on one of the many old barques, brigs, and schooners carrying coals, and all sorts and conditions of men to the land of El Dorado. This money we hoped to raise from Maxwell, as we knew that he got a lot of coin up lately for the purpose of settling with his shearers, etc.'

"When this plain statement of the case was completed, they all sat along the stockyard rail quiet and silent, as if somehow it had relieved their souls to make a clean breast of it. After a bit one man rubbed his chest, and said he was awfully hungry. And immediately each one discovered that he also was in the same condition. You cannot do much good with hungry men, and I, too, was quite peckish, having eaten nothing since an early breakfast, and it was now 3 p.m. So I concluded to soothe my friends, and make my plans afterwards. I at once invited them over to the men's quarters, and asked the cook to give us a good feed of whatever was handy. We soon had big platefuls of mutton chops, plenty of fine damper, and

pannikins of hot tea before us, supplemented by splendid pancakes, which the cook turned out as we required them—and we required them pretty often that day.

"When we had finished all the delicacies which the good old cook could provide, I went into the store and bought seven half-pound packets of tobacco—one for each man. The poor fellows seemed to have run very short of supplies of all sorts, even of necessities, as well as luxuries.

"When we were again settled under a big red gum near the stockyard, in a comfortable frame of mind as far as the inner man was concerned, one of the men—Pat Montague by name—a clever, pleasant fellow, who Murphy told me when I first foregathered with the gang was a nobleman's son who had been transported for the crime of killing deer on a political opponent's land, cleared his throat, and then quietly putting his pipe into his waistcoat pocket, delivered himself as follows:

"'Jim Melville, you have changed the programme of this day's proceedings entirely. And I think it is right and proper that we should tell you the reason we scallawags are here at all, disturbing the rural placidity of

your sylvan abode. No doubt you have surmised—as our pass-words indicate—that we are a band of close friends—and, moreover, you may have jaloused from the aforesaid pass-words, and other peculiarities in our make-up, that we have not always been members of the ruffian class. Therefore, knowing these things you will readily understand that memories of the past have set our minds to mature plans for improving our condition, and to convince all those who have loved us and mourned over our reckless lives that we are still sons of gentlemen, badly brought up, no doubt—badly used after we were brought up—but that we are not wastrels, and a parcel of useless ne'er-do-weels!

"'But to carry out our plans we must make a fresh start in a new land. Australia is a fine country, but it is too limited for us! and we have decided to strike for California, and retrieve our fortunes in that land of gold and many opportunities. But to begin this retrieving process we require to raise at least two hundred pounds. And I put it to you—as I once put a puzzling question to the Prime Minister in the House, when I was Member for dear Old Tipperary—how is that to be done?'

"While this young man (he was still under thirty-five) rattled on in what might have been taken for light, jesting banter, but which I knew was talk that came from the heart, I felt a great sympathy for him, and his companions. They were pretty bad sinners, no doubt, yet I felt that they had been a good deal sinned against; and now they were once more at the parting of the ways, where we all are once or twice in the journey of life. And there came into my heart, like the sound of my father's voice, the words that he made us children repeat every night of our lives:

"'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.'

"Then I made answer to Pat Montague and Larry Murphy. 'Let you two come with me to the house, and I will tell Maxwell your story —as far as I know it—and if he will trust you with a hundred pounds, I will trust you with an equal amount, which is every single penny I have saved in all these years of hard work. And if you play me false on this California game, I will not only lose my fortune, but be laughed at as a poor fool of a greenhorn, who was diddled by the soft blarney of roguish Irishmen!'

"At this, both men, with that quick, impulsive manner which Irishmen have, and which makes them so charming in spite of their many national faults, poor fellows, seized my hands, and implored Saint Peter—with such a terrible oath as made my soul shudder—to cast them into outer darkness if they failed to keep their pledged words to me.

"When I laid the case before Maxwell, he first looked incredulous, and then he looked severely and a bit suspiciously at me, as if this strange proposal were confirmation of some underhand connection of mine with the bush-rangers. But having all the tremendous power of simple rectitude on my side, I coolly repeated my proposal so earnestly that after a few minutes he opened the safe without another word, and took therefrom my nice little canvas bag containing my fortune, of which I was very proud (as parents always are of their *first*) and then he brought out another containing the same amount, and laid them both on the table.

"*My* two friends quietly asked for pen and paper, and while Montague counted the money in my bag, Murphy wrote in a fine large, flowing hand, the following promissory note:

"'Blue Ridge Station, N. S. Wales,
October 22nd, 18—

Received from Timothy Maxwell, Esq., one hundred pounds stg., which I promise to repay with current interest, within four years from date hereof.

Lawrence Murphy.'

"This he handed to Maxwell, with many thanks for the loan of the money, and expressing the hope of repaying before the term expired.

"Then Murphy removed his bag of gold which his friend pronounced to be correct, and proceeded to count the other bag while Montague wrote a receipt for me. And thus ended that queer business, which Maxwell called a very shady transaction for him, a J.P., to be engaged in.

"The two men picked up the bags of coin, and quietly thanking Maxwell and me, as if we had merely done some trifling courtesy—such as is usual between gentlemen—they joined their comrades, and the gang at once mounted and rode off.

"It has always been a great satisfaction to me that I was the humble means of setting

Lawrence Murphy and his friends on the right track, which they had lost as so many do in the confusing cross tracks of life. You may say that it did not amount to much after all, and I freely admit that it did not. But you must note that the widow's two mites did not amount to much, but somehow they became such a vast treasure that men have not ceased to count them after a lapse of two thousand years. So, as Paul advises, 'as we have therefore opportunity, let us do good unto all men.'

CHAPTER X

THE GREAT DROUGHT

"I MUST now tell you something of the great drought. I can only tell you a little of it, for no man could tell the whole story of those three years of misery, and keep his reason.

"We had had a very good winter, and though the following summer and autumn were unusually hot and dry, yet the heavy rains of the previous winter had so saturated the earth that vegetation of the stronger sort stood out remarkably well, and the surface springs did

not yet suffer at all. So we went along in our usual way, but every man on the Station kept his weather eye open for clouds and winds that smelt of rain.

"The next winter passed, and we entered upon our second summer of *drought*; for by this time we had given up all pretending, and made plans for moving mobs of sheep to the salt bush swamps, and driving cattle into the heavy timber country where they could at least get a mouthful of leaves, good or bad, but at any rate something to keep them alive.

"Maxwell was married by this time. His wife was the daughter of a parson who was settled at a bush township about a hundred and fifty miles nearer Sydney than Blue Ridge.

"Mrs. Maxwell was, and is still, a very religious woman, and soon after Tim brought her to Blue Ridge she instituted the plan of gathering as many people as were handy about the Homestead on Sunday, and she got Maxwell to read the prayers for the day. Then she managed to get a little harmonium from Sydney, and by degrees induced everybody to join in singing the hymns. And it was truly wonderful how eagerly we all began to look forward to these little Sunday services.

"At the end of our second year's drought Maxwell's father-in-law, the Rev. Alfred Weston, came up to visit his daughter and Maxwell. He stayed at Blue Ridge for some weeks, and regularly read prayers at night, and always held proper Church services on Sunday. Never once in all the weeks he was on the Station did good parson Weston neglect to pray for rain! And he always added these words, 'Or send water, O Lord, in any form which Thou seest fit, to relieve Thy poor suffering creatures that are dying all around us!' That prayer used to puzzle me a bit, for I thought it was quite superfluous, it was rain we wanted! and I thought that the parson should keep on persistently praying for that one thing! But I know better now, and the parson's petition was answered right enough.

"Another year passed of dire loss and hopeless efforts to move stock to low muddy swamps where there were any signs of moisture. But our lives became so distressing day by day, trying to do what it was impossible to do, namely, save horses and cows that had been pets about the Homestead for years, that even the bravest of us began to give up hope, and the wisdom of abandoning the Run was openly discussed among the hands.

"At this miserable stage there came a letter from Maxwell's father which seemed to presage the end of Blue Ridge. The old gentleman wrote to his son that under the hopeless condition of the Station, with all the stock either dying or dead, and seeing that the Run was not freehold, he would not advance any more money on the property, and the only thing for him—Tim—to do was to abandon the place, and try to find employment elsewhere, and nearer civilization. As to selling the place, his father said, that was utterly impossible, no one would give a pound note for the whole concern.

"In all the years I had been on the Station, Maxwell and I had been more like close friends than employer and employed. So when Tim laid the whole dismal case before me, and read his father's final decision regarding the financial question, I knew only too well that the matter was about hopeless. But I determined not to give up until *I* had fired my last shot and played my last card.

"I had not much leisure during that terrible time. I was constantly engaged about the Run trying to save a remnant of the stock. But whenever I had a spare day at the Homestead, I read up every scrap that I could find upon the

history of artesian well-boring, from the first experiments in Artois, to the splendid success of the system in Algeria and elsewhere. From hazy dreams, my mind gradually became possessed with the fixed idea that in this direction lay hope and salvation for our miserable bit of country, which seemed to be perishing under a curse.

"By this time all our shallow surface wells had completely dried up, and were as dusty at the bottom as the ground on the surface. But those wells which were sixty or more feet deep never quite gave out through all the years of drought. And it was by having men stationed at the three deep wells drawing water that we were enabled to save a few of the most valuable horses and cattle. To my unscientific mind these wells were proofs that *in* the ground was the water which good Parson Weston prayed for 'in any form.' However, that was not the water which eventually saved the Run, it was hundreds of feet deeper still. These two or three wells, with their few buckets of water apiece, did not count for much on four hundred thousand acres of dry dusty land. But they encouraged me, although they did not cheer poor Maxwell worth a cent! And at last he

quite broke down, and told me that he was going to take his wife and a few personal effects in a couple of wagons, and leave Blue Ridge to the miserable wombats and kangaroos! These poor creatures had become so utterly regardless of danger and their natural fear of man, that they constantly prowled around the premises hunting for any scraps of food or drops of water. And seeing these poor things about the place, and the disappearance of the fine fat cattle and sheep of former years, it was quite natural for Maxwell in his despair to designate them his legal heirs.

"When Maxwell explained to me his plan of abandoning the Run, I strongly urged him to try to induce his father to make an effort at finding artesian water, for I declared that I felt certain that if this were done abundance of water would be found, and he would retrieve his fortunes, and make Blue Ridge ten times more valuable than it was before the drought.

"But it was altogether beyond my powers of persuasion to move Maxwell from his purpose. He even told me that he did not intend to go to his father in Sydney, for he inferred, from some pretty plain hints in late letters, that the old gentleman was in rather tight circumstances

himself, as he had refused a hundred pounds which Tim had asked for to tide him and his wife over the next few months, until he could find employment. Then poor Tim added, 'I wish I had that hundred sovereigns, which I foolishly gave to those rascally bushrangers at your suggestion, James! But it did not matter much, for if I had not given the money then, it would all have disappeared as hopelessly by this time.'

"I now realized how low matters had got with Maxwell when his father refused another hundred pounds on a property that four years before was netting anywhere from eight to ten thousand per annum. That night I talked to Maxwell till near daylight trying to persuade him to go to his father and personally show to the old gentleman what a grand success artesian water was certain to be, and how it would retrieve everybody's fortune. But poor Tim was too depressed to move an inch in the matter. However, he agreed with me far enough to give me a letter to his father, and another to his banker—the very man upon whose steam yacht you and I had that pleasant cruise around Port Jackson the other day.

"Maxwell promised to stay on the place

until I should go to Sydney, and see what I could do with his father and the banker, and bring back my report. In the letters Maxwell gave me *carte blanche* to make any agreement I thought proper about the Run, but with the express reservation that I did not involve him personally in any way in what he considered a lost game. He sent by me all deeds in his possession, and gave me a full power of attorney in conjunction with his father and banker to settle the business as we saw fit.

"The night before I started on what I knew in my inmost soul was the turning point in my life, our faithful black-fellow postman arrived. As we only had a mail once a month in those days, it was an event of much importance to all hands. Now, when we have letters and newspapers on the breakfast table every morning, we don't think so much about it.

"As we all stood around receiving our letters from the book-keeper—who was also postmaster at Blue Ridge—Maxwell burst out with a wild cry.

"'See here, my dear James!' he cried, 'Your bushrangers are honest men after all. Oh Garoo! Here is an order on the bank of New South Wales for one hundred and sixty pounds sterling.

The original one hundred pounds, and sixty pounds interest for four years' use of the money, which the fellow states is current interest as stipulated for in the I.O.U. He also calmly states that interest in that sweet land of California is computed by the month, and so may seem to us a bit irregular. Oh my eye! would I had ten thousand pounds at that lovely irregular rate! Why did you not tell me to give those angels (in the disguise of bush-rangers) five hundred sovereigns that lucky day? I thought you were a weak milksop at that time, now I find you are a discerner of men's hearts!' Then Tim gave an extempore sort of war-dance, to the intense delight of the black-fellow postman, winding up by giving him a resounding slap on his bare shoulders, and putting a shining half-crown in his grateful hands.

"Pat Montague wrote me a very racy and characteristic letter, describing how the party had got along in California. He said that when they landed in San Francisco, they were at once denominated by the Yankee people of the country 'Sydney Ducks!' 'Why they should have designated us by this gentle cognomen we could not at first make out, but later we dis-

covered that all men from the Australian side of the world bore this poetical appellation. One day I suggested to some gentlemen of the town that on the same principle I supposed that they called ladies from our side 'Duckesses,' but this mild pleasantry was not received with favour, and thereafter I was more careful. These Yankee people are the most tenderly gallant creatures in the world towards the feminine portion of humankind. You can instantly reduce a group of these gentlemen to tears by relating the sufferings of some poor weeping lady carrying the body of her sweet little pug-dog which had been run over at some busy street crossing. Or you can excite the same company to hopping-madness by recounting cases of such brutality as men coolly keeping their seats in a car when some adorable young woman had to stand!'

"Then Pat proceeded. 'We are getting on finely, and I trust that you are all O.K. at Blue Ridge. And that you are no more troubled by bushrangers, as in the dear old days. Herewith please find one hundred and sixty pounds, principal and interest of your kind loan to a gang of *bushies*.

'Yours affectionately,

'PATRICK MONTAGUE.

"'*PS.*—After the good lesson you taught us we have all learned to help lame dogs over stiles, as we have opportunity.'

'P. M.'

"With my one hundred and sixty pounds draft in my pocket I felt myself quite a capitalist, and I determined to get away down to Sydney as quickly as possible, and try what plans I could arrange regarding Blue Ridge. I was loth to abandon the great splendid property which I felt certain only required the treasures of water which lay hidden in its depths to be brought to the surface to make it ten times more fertile than it ever was before.

"Maxwell was quite agreeable that I should go down to Sydney and see what I could do, he awaiting my return. But he strictly limited my absence to the shortest possible time, as he could not endure the miserable condition of the place much longer. And really it was most depressing to go anywhere about the Run and see the deplorable state of matters. There were very few sheep or cattle left alive on the place. And the few that were still able to crawl were always crowding around the miserable muddy remains of water-holes, while all about the treacherous margins were the dead and dying

bodies of sheep and cattle, which had ventured too far into the sticky morass, trying to reach the little puddle of moisture which still glittered temptingly in the centre.

"It was very curious that the wild animals, kangaroos, wallabys, wombats, etc., never fell into the mud traps which proved so fatal to domestic creatures. Which shows that the civilizing process has not added to the understanding of the lower strata of our fellow creatures, whatever it has done to the higher strata.

CHAPTER XI

MELVILLE'S DREAM REALIZED

"ARMED with Maxwell's letters of introduction, and my own stout heart, I started for Sydney to 'make a spoon or spoil a horn' as the saying goes. I was strictly limited by Maxwell as to time, but had complete *carte blanche* with regard to everything else.

"When I reached town I had a long interview with Maxwell's father, but I found the old gentleman absolutely obdurate against any scheme of carrying on the Run, and making an

attempt to find artesian water. The last four years had been so disastrous that the father, like the son, was quitè determined to close up the business without spending another shilling upon Blue Ridge.

"I was very much disappointed, as you may imagine, at the result of my endeavour to enlist Maxwell senior in my views. For I had thought over the matter so intently, and my mind had become so imbued with the artesian idea, that I felt practically certain the splendid property could be saved by that system.

"Although Mr. Maxwell could not, or rather would not, do anything, he gave me a few lines of introduction to his and his son's banker.

"I found my way into the presence of the great man (a banker in the colonies is really a great man) after a good deal of waiting, the various subordinates evidently considering me too young and unsophisticated to be of much account. It is most amusing and even touching to see how those bright youths—or rather their descendants—fly to open a door for me now without a moment's delay.

"The manager was rather a young looking man to be at the head of such a great concern as the Bank of ——. But he was one of those

men who acquire knowledge at an age when most boys are diligently acquiring the arts of football, cricket, and pitch-penny.

"After reading my letters, I found the banker quite willing to listen to my story, and having got my opportunity I went into it pretty freely. I stated all the circumstances which led to my position on Blue Ridge. And then I gave him a short description of the Run as it was before the drought, and its present miserable condition. The whole trouble, of course, I fully explained was the want of rain. But if the Run could be made independent of rain it would be one of the finest estates in Australia. And this could only be done with artesian water.

"At the end of a two-hours confab—the manager taking copious notes every little while —he was gracious enough to invite me to lunch, which I understood as a very favourable omen.

"During the next few days we had many meetings. One important factor in our preliminary negotiations was finding two Frenchmen who had bored wells in Algeria, and had been engaged and brought to this country by a gentleman on speculation. But the gentleman had failed in his negotiation with the Government, and so the two French engineers were

stranded in a strange land without money or friends, and were therefore eager to engage with any party at very reasonable rates. At length Maxwell senior, the banker, and myself, formed ourselves into a committee of three to settle the business. The banker had overcome the old gentleman's aversion to my pet scheme far enough to consent to act with us on condition that he was not to be involved further than simply releasing the mortgages which he held over the Run and stock. Of course these had to be cancelled before a sale could be made. And it was very touching to see how eager the old gentleman was to get utterly clear of 'Blue Ridge,' and turn his back on the whole miserable concern which had cost him much money and still more anxiety.

"We soon got to work and settled matters as follows, much to my satisfaction and to poor old Maxwell's also. Firstly, Blue Ridge was to be sold to the highest bidder, that highest bidder to be myself—under the banker's direction. Secondly, the banker to advance the purchase money and to hold a mortgage over everything. And, thirdly, the banker to carry me on with all necessary supplies for two years for certain, but only at his option after that period.

"I need not linger over these transactions, suffice it to say that I was not only the highest, but the only bidder. And Blue Ridge fell to me at the ridiculously low figure of one hundred and fifty pounds; an estate that would have called forth many a bid over fifty thousand five or six years before. The banker was highly delighted when I produced my draft of one hundred and sixty pounds, and coolly laid it before the auctioneer with an air as if there were plenty more where that came from, instead of only a few carefully preserved notes, upon which I was depending to take me safely out of Sydney, and back to the wilderness. Of course the Run was only leasehold at that time, but my shrewd banker assured me that he would secure the freehold for me as soon as he heard of the success of the first well. Which he did at a very low rate.

"So all final matters were settled, and I—James Melville, the cotter's son—became owner of the vast estate of Blue Ridge. At that early stage of my career, with my natural portion of the vanity and improvidence of youth, I had yet common sense enough to hold myself rigidly to 'the common task, the daily round' in case I lost the concentration of mind which is necessary

to success in great projects, namely by keeping a close watch and control over details, as Wellington did at Waterloo. And I fully realized that I was now at the beginning of *my* Waterloo of success or failure.

"Having settled matters to the best of my ability, one morning (after a rather sleepless night, I must confess) I got my two Frenchmen and myself into a hard seated third class railway compartment, after seeing all the gear and machinery of the well boring plant put safely on a truck. Shortly before the creaky slow train started, the old banker—but he was young then —came down to see me off, and give me a final word of advice.

"'Good-bye,' he said, 'remember that you have a hard row to hoe! Don't give up until you test the pros and cons of the job you have bravely undertaken! If it all proves a failure, don't take to bushranging, come back to me, and I will put you on to something else. But above all, keep a stiff upper lip, and brave heart, for no good battle was ever won lacking these. Good-bye, adios, bon-voyage!' The last words were spoken as the train crawled out of the station, and we waved our hats to each other.

"When I explained the terms of the sale of

Blue Ridge, and my plans for its restoration to more than its pristine prosperity, and at the same time offered to hand over all my lately acquired rights to him, and to do my best for the place as his overseer, Maxwell only looked gloomy and said:

"'My dear Jim Melville! You have been a good shepherd, a good stockman, a good manager, and, more than all, a good friend, to me all these years. And I know that you wish to do me good every time. But I sincerely wish that you had cleared out of this God-forsaken country and had not squandered your precious little hundred pounds, nor wasted any more of your life on this dust heap! Life is too short to play ducks and drakes with our few fleeting years. But since you are determined to go on with this mad scheme of finding water out of *wells* to rejuvenate four hundred thousand acres of dust, back into its former beautiful fertility, I will not forsake you in your madness. And the wife has also declared her intention to stay to the end, that is until you come away with us, and not persist in this obstinate struggle against Nature until you leave your bones bleaching under the cruel sun, where the bones of all our splendid stock are whitening to-day!'

"By this time every shepherd, stockman, bullock-driver, and knock-about-man had dusted from the station. The only human beings left on the vast Estate (excepting a few blacks) were Maxwell, his wife, myself, the two French engineers, and a wagon-driver whom I had engaged at Copelands to bring me, the two Frenchmen, and their boring apparatus, up to Blue Ridge.

"There was no need for men upon the place in those dismal days. The few animals left simply wandered at their own miserable wills, and died welcoming death when they could wander no more. Prize merino sheep worth fifty pounds each, imported cattle that had cost two hundred pounds a head, took their chance with the rest, and died like scrubbers that were hardly worth as many sixpences.

"But all this misery did not depress me as it did poor Maxwell. I have seen him return again and again with tears in his eyes, from wandering about the Run, where he had been trying to save sheep and cattle by cutting down trees to afford the suffering creatures a few mouthfuls of the half shrivelled leaves.

"His wife also shared his depression, of course, but, woman-like, she could bear it better

than her husband, and the good soul got up our simple meals without a murmur or a cross look. The few of us left all messed together, the Frenchmen being quite nice mannered chaps, and my wagoner a quiet old-fashioned Irishman.

"For the experimental well we had fixed upon a spot about a quarter of a mile from the Homestead. If we struck such a flow as the Frenchmen and I expected, there would be abundance of water to irrigate all the home paddocks where we kept, or rather had kept, much of our finest stock. There was a small paddock near the house of about twenty acres, where we usually turned out our riding horses. This paddock we had managed to maintain in a state of faint semi-greenness in the midst of all the surrounding desolation, by means of one of the few remaining wells which had not completely given out. Over this we had managed to rig a primitive but wonderfully effective windmill which set a little pump in constant action, that is when there was any wind, and we generally had a breeze from about ten a.m. to sunset. If it had not been for this cheery little well we could not have stayed at the Homestead at all, for it was the only water within fifteen miles. And, moreover, but for this well the engineers

could not have found sufficient water for their boiler within a radius of twenty miles, and we had no cattle to haul water even half that distance.

* * * * *

"So we kept up life and hope for some five months, and shipwrecked sailors drifting on a raft never watched more eagerly for a shower of rain to slake their deadly thirst than we watched day after day for a gleam of water on the steel drill, that had now reached seven hundred feet deep.

"At last, on a day which I remember with an intense clearness as I do two, or at most three, other days in my life! one of the Frenchmen came tearing home, leaping fences and yelling like a madman upon Maxwell and me to come! He was quite out of breath, and the only words he could utter were:

"'*Courir!* Water!—Queek!—Queek!' And then we four (the Irishman had come rushing from some job or other, when he heard the cry of 'water') started across the paddock, looking and acting—I have no doubt—like maniacs on some mad quest.

"When we reached the scene of operations the engineer had reversed his machine, and was

cautiously lifting the drill to the surface. This was no easy job with the primitive rig which the Frenchmen had brought with them to test the first well.

"As we approached Le Bas (that was the chief engineer's name), his hands were fully occupied with the engine, but his gleaming eyes, and his wild Basque folk-song—which I verily believe that in his excitement he trolled forth quite unconsciously—confirmed me in the belief that my wildest dreams were near realization! And in spite of much loss of breath during that mad run, I flourished my tattered but once beautiful cabbage tree hat, and gave such a startling hurrah that a poor skinny old-man-kangaroo, which seemed too weak to get out of our way, pricked up his ears in wild panic, and with a few ungainly bounds disappeared in the scrub, like a youngster.

"When we four added our united strength to the rope and chain, we soon brought the drill to the surface. The well had been piped for the first fifty feet as the boring was through loose earth. At that depth solid rock was struck, and thereafter, although the progress was slow —from four to five feet a day—there was no further trouble with caving or loose earth.

"As we worked at the chain to get the drill safely up—an operation which had to be done very cautiously or the heavy steel instrument might drop to the bottom of the well, and so be lost beyond all our powers of recovery—the Frenchmen wore smiling faces, every little while putting their ears to the top of the pipe, and whispering, 'Bravo! mon ami, le bon *Eau*! Ah merci, bon Dieu!'

"Then came the supreme moment! The drill appeared at the top of the pipe, and little squirts of water kept hissing up as if eager to get into the sunlight after ages of imprisonment in the dark hidden recesses of the earth. One of the Frenchmen—good chap! he was a sympathetic judge of human feelings at supreme moments—stopped the wheezing little engine, and held up his hand for us to cease hauling. In a moment he filled a pannikin from a hissing little jet, and handing it to me said:

"'Drink, Monsieur! And thank the Blessed Virgin, who has given us this first *trésor* from the earth, and will give us many more!'

"I did drink, humbly and thankfully! Not exactly in the form which Le Bas advised (we had been taught in different schools), but none the less I drank with a humble and grateful

heart. And, oh the delight of that most delicious draught of nectar I ever put to my lips!

"Then the drill was lifted almost clear of the pipe by the great force of water; and when we got things cleared away, there was a splendid flow rushing over the pipe five or six feet above the ground, and pouring out in a splendid circle like a great crystal lipped vase of the most exquisite workmanship and wondrous colours.

"We were all deeply affected, but nearly all silently. The Frenchmen gazed at the wonderful sight, crossing themselves reverently several times, with very grateful hearts, I knew full well. Maxwell never said a word, and looked pale and even awe-stricken as he plunged his hands again and again into the cool sparkling treasure from the earth! That earth which, to judge from our portion of it, was burned dry to its very centre!

"My Irish wagon-driver looked long and silently at the splendid rush of water, and then burst forth with a pathos in his voice as if tears were not far off:

"'Ah! Thank the good God! This is the prettiest sight I have ever seen since I last saw ould Dennis Macshane pour the beautiful Mountain Still whisky with a fine free gush into

the bonnie wooden Coggies! Ah, that was the stuff to make a man thankful, and this is another! And oh, it is a miracle of the Blessed Saints how the good man Dennis managed to brew the beautiful liquid and keep clear of the excisemen spalpeens! That was one good miracle, and this is another! Praise God!'

"That well was the first of the hundred and forty exhaustless wells on Blue Ridge Station to-day, and which have practically rendered the Run independent of rain.

"The night following the day of the great event of the first flowing well, I had a long momentous talk with Maxwell and his wife on the altered aspect of affairs since we had proved by the actual flowing water that irrigation was not only possible but simple and practical, and that consequently the restoration of the Run to more than its former fertility was only a matter of intelligence and perseverance. I therefore urgently advised Maxwell—lest in the future he should bitterly regret having lost the splendid estate—to take over the property just as I held it, freehold, and clear title. As I say, I urged him to take it, although I must admit it was done with a severe pang, for I had visions of the splendid estate Blue Ridge

might possibly become. But I was determined to hold the property only on two conditions, namely, a clean title and a clean conscience.

"But Maxwell merely shook his head, and although he thanked me for what he called my generous offer, yet declared that he had slept better, and decidedly felt better, since he was 'shut' of the whole concern, and found himself a free man.

"'And now,' said Maxwell, 'I will have an unbiased mind to study philosophy. For instance, "A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth," and odd things of that sort, which of course if a man becomes wealthy it would not only be foolishness, but I suppose bad form to study at all! So my dear Jim, I will keep on the safe lowly paths, and give you the benefit of my discoveries from time to time.'

"And mind you, with all my added knowledge since then of men and the world in general, I cannot say Maxwell made a mistake that night. And I know for certain that he has never regretted his choice! In spite of his active habits of mind and body, there is a singular simplicity of character, and mysticism, in Tim Maxwell's make up, which exemplifies in a

wonderful manner the profound truthfulness of that aphorism which he quoted so aptly when we were both at the parting of the ways.

"'A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.'

"And now at eventide, when I look backward and take everything into consideration, I really think that Maxwell has had the best of it. A thousand times less care and bother, sounder sleep, fewer regrets, and none of the worries which dog the footsteps of the so-called successful man. Never a shudder by day or night at the ghastly sword of Damocles, suspended by a single hair over the rich man's head even in the chances and changes of this world, and in the world to come! 'It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of God.' So there is no doubt that Tim Maxwell got the best of the bargain, and what is more, the lucky dog is wise enough to know it!

"I am referring to a time nearer forty than thirty years ago. And Maxwell has been my trusted overseer here ever since. We never had a writing between us, but that night we exchanged our old fashioned Erles-penny in the shape of a crooked sixpence from each to each.

In these we punched a hole, and have carried them outwardly on our watch-chains, and inwardly in our hearts, faithfully to this day. That is the end of my little bush story. And as you have noticed the singularly contented expression on my overseer's face, you know the reason. For Tim Maxwell was developing into a first-class-anxious-business-man, when I took the load off his shoulders, and became the burden-bearer myself!"

THE LAST CRUISE OF THE *DEVONPORT*

THE LAST CRUISE OF THE *DEVONPORT*

AND THE VISION A MORTAL MAN WAS PERMITTED TO SEE

PRELUDE

Shipmate! 'twas thirty years agone, mayhap 'twas somewhat more,
I sailed in the whaler *Devonport*, from England's bonnie shore,
In the month o' May, when hawthorns bloom, and merry cuckoos call,
When throstles build, and cowslips blow, and apple-blossoms fall.

My father prayed to hold me, for I was his only lad,
But I caught the glamour of the sea, my heart grew hot and mad
With the tales the seamen told me of a broader earth and sky,
Where youth's dreams had freer action, where the blessed islands lie!

I left my weeping mother and my sisters—silly fool!
And many a year has flown since my head had time to cool;

But the glamour of the ocean holds me yet; I cannot sleep
If I do not feel the motion, hear the moaning of the deep.

Oh! the bonnie white-caps leaping with a merry all-sail breeze,
Oh! the mystery and the beauty of the night in tropic seas,
Oh! the ecstasy of flying when the storm-wrack wails and cries,
And day and night are all as one, in leaden-coloured skies.

Some live upon the land and die, and then are laid to rest,
Beside the dear old village church, in ground that has been blest:
But, shipmate, when my watch is called, no dreary ground for me,
But a grave a thousand fathoms deep, beneath the tropic sea!

A bed upon the coral sand, where colours warm and bright
Will shimmer round me all the day, and stars through all the night;
Where I'll hear the ocean voices—faint and far the breaker's roar,
Floating softly on the night-wind, from some palm-encircled shore.

CHAPTER I

THE SOUTH SEAS

WHAT I am going to set down is neither story nor history, it is merely an authentic record of second sight, a kind of sight which is frequently hereditary in families, and which my friend Kinross told me had been a gift in his family for generations. In Scotland it is not at all prized or paraded by the gifted individual, man or woman, in fact it is always concealed and ignored as much as possible; in olden times for the dire punishments, both civil and ecclesiastical, meted out to the "no canny body," man, woman, or child; and in modern days for fear of the ridicule which the possessor always excites among the so-called universally-enlightened population.

On our voyage from Heao to Sydney, both Kinross and I felt a bit lonely after nearly a couple of months of most congenial companionship with our friends in that fairy bower of enchantment; and so my old friend and I drew

closer and closer than we had ever done before —if that, indeed, were possible. In this way, of course, we did heaps of talking on that trip, some of it frivolous, no doubt, but a good deal of it profitable, and certainly entertaining to our two selves; what it might be to others I cannot exactly say. But the following reminiscence of a strange adventure which befell Kinross in his young days interested me greatly, and I think it well worth recording.

Kinross gave me several instances of second sight occurring in his own family, which were absolutely authentic, besides those which had come into his own life. I remember one most distinctly, which seemed to me very tender and touching. Once when his grandfather (who was a sailor, as all the sons of the family had been for generations) was captured by a French frigate, after a hard-fought fight, and cast into prison to await his chance of exchange, he managed to send a letter of love and condolence to his wife by the hand of a friend who was fortunate enough to be included in a batch of exchanged prisoners. In this letter he condoled with his wife over the death of a beloved child, of whose death, or even illness, it was quite impossible for him to have received the slightest

intimation excepting through spiritual messengers.

Many such instances of second sight were perfectly well authenticated in the family, and Kinross related several interesting and touching records of these strange (as it seems to our limited minds) premonitions, but which, no doubt, are to the spiritual world as simple as common daily events of life are to us.

As bearing on this subject, Kinross gave me the following account of an adventure which befell himself on the South American coast, and which to him was as absolutely real as any other event of his life. My friend and I had become so thoroughly congenial to each other that it never entered our minds to be reticent, or in the least degree reserved in our mutual reminiscences, hence when either of us got launched on any subject whatever (and they were many and curious) we were never brought to a standstill by that disagreeable feeling "What will my listener think of this." We had too perfect innate knowledge of each other's minds ever to fear that our confidences would be misunderstood or unappreciated.

On that voyage from the Marquesas to Sydney we made a pretty straight course of it,

and consequently passed within hailing distance, as you may say, of many an enchanted island and wonderful coral reef, with nothing to distinguish the latter from the sparkling tropic seas save the waving palm fronds and the curling crests of the combers as they crashed and boomed, threatening every moment to sweep reef and little grove of cocoa-nuts out of existence. But that was merely a fancy! for the brave little architects who built the reef—working day and night for many a year—had done their work so faithfully that storm and sea might crush the life out of the stoutest ship that ever sailed the seas, but could never budge the clever little zoophyte's work by one inch.

It was drawing on to autumn in those latitudes, and we found the trades very light even by day—when as a rule these appropriately-named winds breeze up their stiffest—while at night they dropped so light that the schooner barely had steering way.

This would have been hard luck for a mariner anxious to make a quick passage, but to Kinross's philosophical mind, and to my Bohemian nature, it was altogether welcome and soothing, while to our Kanaka crew it was simply the perfection of sea-life.

Many a day we slid slowly past enchanting tropical islands clothed to their utmost summits with gorgeously luxuriant forests, and for miles and miles their white beaches shaded by splendid cocoa-nut groves; where by night—as the schooner crept slowly past—we could make out here and there the flicker of a fire where we knew that the merry islanders were at their evening meal, happy, careless, and healthy, as they always are, if what we call *civilization* only leaves them alone.

* * * * *

It was under such conditions that Kinross and I exchanged many memories of bygone days; some that might have seemed trifling enough perhaps to a disinterested listener, but not one of them in the least frivolous to us, for we were too dependent upon and too interested in each other to think the smallest scraps of the vanished years unworthy of record. We both had the sort of mind that finds great entertainment in simple personal experiences, the commonplace things which befall us all more or less in our journey of life—in short, facts rather than inventions of the imagination.

It was mostly in the glorious nights that we had our best talks. With the moonlight and

starlight so perfectly pure and clear that it seemed to us that we could see beyond those glittering worlds, and right into the mysterious spaces where mortals cannot explore even with all their wonderful inventions, and still more wonderful intellect. "A little lower than the angels"! Ah, proud vain man! *a little lower!* there is your limit, and you had better give it up, and try to become like the little children of whom Christ said "of such is the Kingdom of God."

Often our quiet talks were on the fascinating subject of the many instances of communications with the life beyond, which are recorded in the Bible, but which are so rare, vague, and unreliable in modern times. For, if we except the trashy manifestations of the so-called "spiritualists," crystal-gazers, fakirs, etc., communication with the greater Life which we know lies around us seems to have ceased. Is it want of Faith on our part, or is it the blighting influence of infidelity which has closed the portal that once stood so freely open to all who came to God in the simplicity and faith of children? The modern men and women of civilization are so constituted and shaped by modern ideas and materialistic beliefs that the spiritual world has

nearly faded from their conception altogether, and the tremendous facts recorded in the oldest and most profound Book in our world have come to be regarded as old-world fables. If you speak of some event happening, which to our finite understanding is quite beyond the ordinary course of what is called "natural law," you are immediately met with an incredulous stare, and the pert query, "You do not believe in miracles, do you?" and ten to one you wriggle out of your (under the circumstances) untenable position as politely as you may, but by no means changed in your beliefs one way or the other by the frivolous, foolish question.

As for our Religion, and what is called "natural law," they have been a series of miracles from the creation of Adam to the birth of the last infant which made its advent on our earth. You cannot get rid of miracles! Natural law, as it is glibly called, and miracles are one and the same. Men have given them different names, but they are equally beyond the power of man to make or unmake, and both are equally beyond our mortal ken, and probably will be beyond our spiritual knowledge in the unexplored regions towards which we are hasting.

As bearing on this fascinating subject, my

friend related the following experience, which seems to me well worth preserving. With regard to the facts of the incident I know that I can rely upon my friend's recollections as I could upon my own personal experience.

I will practically relate the adventure in his own words, and though I may misquote the original words here or there I will follow his exact meaning. And this is how Kinross told it to me as we were slowly slipping—or rather drifting—past the Samoa Islands.

CHAPTER II

PRINCESS

"AFTER my service with the Doctor and his wife on the Island—all of which you know—I went back to my position on the brig *Queen Mary*. Captain Muir, by his agreement with my father, was honourably if not legally bound to deliver me up safely at the end of the voyage. Thus after five or six years of sea life I found myself once more under the paternal roof, and amid the familiar and still loved surroundings of childhood.

" The old scenes were as delightful and dear as ever. The hills and the burns were as beautiful as in bygone days; the hearts I loved, and who loved me, were true as of yore, and perfectly unchanged. But—there is always a *but* in this life—alas, I was changed! irremediably changed in soul and body, and in my outlook on the world and life.

" My father quickly diagnosed my trouble (he had gone through it all himself in the days of his youth), but my mother, dear soul, never quite understood my malady. And that's the difference between men and women "—said Kinross reflectively—" Men have to fight the battle of life in the open, women have to make and keep the home—a man may buy a house but he can't make a home—if either of them shirk their destiny, sorrow and disaster must result.

" So it ended, or I should rather say it led to me making another start on the voyage of life. This time I shipped as A.B. on the whaler *Devonport* preparing to sail from the port of the same name, on a whaling voyage to the South Seas. The *Devonport* was a fine wholesome ship of a fashion that is not often met with nowadays. Plenty of beam to carry canvas on a bowline in a stiff breeze, without having men

stationed at every halyard for fear of turning turtle—as they have to do on their very uncomfortable swordfish-clippers that go racing half under water whenever there is a bit of a sea on, and—as old sailors say—'only coming up once a week to spout.'

"The *Devonport* lowered four boats, and carried a crew of thirty-four men all told. In those days the English whaleships were fitted out for long voyages, never less than two, and generally for three or four years if they went fishing in the south seas. Of course the English or Scotch ships bound for the Greenland whaling grounds only intended to remain out during one summer, although some had to stay out for two or three, and some for ever in those inhospitable regions of snow and ice.

"But the *Devonport* was bound for the warm, laughing, south seas, not the sullen frozen waters of the North.

"Our Captain—William Truelove by name—had his wife and daughter (a beautiful little girl of some eleven or twelve) along with him that voyage. His wife had been with the Captain on other voyages, but Princess—that was the only name she was known by on the ship—had never been on a real deep-sea voyage before, only little

pleasure trips on local steamers. So it was a never-failing entertainment for the little lady to watch the various operations of setting, reefing, taking in sail, and all the many changes taking place on a great sailing ship, instead of only hearing and seeing the management of the noisy, smoky little hookers she had hitherto been accustomed to.

"As the voyage progressed we of the forecastle soon found that Princess was a wonderful sort of child, I suppose her parents knew it before! As she became more accustomed to the ship and sea life she grew more and more fearless, much to the terror of her parents, but to the intense delight and amusement of the sailors. Many and many a time I have seen her standing on the fore, or maintop, clinging to the rigging, her half-girlish, half-boyish rig fluttering in the sharp breeze; while she stood safe and firm laughing and calling to the men as they made the slapping sail secure and smiled delightedly back to her, but all the while keeping their tell-tale faces out of sight from the officer on deck, for fear of a severe reprimand for encouraging the child in her dangerous pranks.

"It was rather strange to a youngster like myself, with all the memory of my strict Scotch

bringing up still fresh in mind—instant obedience, etc.—to see the easy way our little lady forgot her parents' commands, commands which apparently were not expected to be obeyed. For instance, her mother would strictly instruct the child not to go beyond the break of the poop —an order which it was simply impossible for an active child to obey, with all the attractions here and there, fore and aft. In a few minutes Princess would be sitting on an upturned bucket or a coil of rope, eagerly asking the carpenter questions about some work or other which he might have on hand. Then when her mother would look up from her book, she would sigh and shake her head, while her daughter would smile, wave her hand, and so would end the strict injunctions for that time.

"But you must not suppose that Princess was a spoiled child in the ordinary sense of that word. In fact it was impossible to place her in the category of ordinary little girls, for she did not belong to any class or kind I had ever met in my limited experience, and even Chips admitted to me that 'the lassie was quite by ordinar' and a wonderfu' wean!' This from Chips, with his many years and vast experience, gave me much food for thought, and a vague sort of re-

verence for our little lady. We soon found out that her kind heart was full of love and tenderness. Suffering of any kind instantly aroused her sympathy and desire to help the afflicted. If a man cut his finger, in a flash Princess would have a nice bandage, with some soothing stuff from the medicine chest, and the wounded man always declared that the very touch of her hands, as she carefully bound up his finger, allayed the pain.

" Princess had also a way with her which was quite startling to my calm, orthodox Scotch mind. She had the strangest modes of expressing her wishes to God, and imploring His mercy upon any one who aroused the love and sympathy in her kind little soul. But in spite of her queer ways she was by no means an unruly, or on the other hand a morbid, child. She always paid the strictest attention to the politely expressed wishes of the carpenter, ' Chips,' as Princess had learned from the sailors to call him. If he expressed the opinion that she ought to go to her mother, as perhaps she was feeling lonely, the young lady would smile sweetly, trot off to her mother, and presently we would see them talking and laughing together over some pleasant story, or funny joke.

"In looking back to those old days, I find it quite impossible to draw Princess's character correctly. One day, or rather one moment, I would make up my mind that she was an ordinary little girl, and the next I would feel certain she was not of earth at all, but a beautiful little angel wandering out of heaven—and perhaps she was!

"With all her strange ways, and quickly changing moods, I never saw the child in anger, as ordinary children are so apt to be. Only once I saw her in a fierce blaze of indignation, and certainly she had ample cause for her anger on the occasion I refer to; but I will come to that episode by and by, if you have patience.

* * * * *

"We rounded Cape Horn in the month of January, so we had the mildest time of the year to pass that storm-infested region.

"While slowly working our way north in the Pacific we had much good luck, taking several fine sperm whales before we reached Callao, which port we were to call at to ship our oil direct home, and to lay in fresh stores for our future use—we had been out nearly ten months, and were getting a bit short of things.

"Before taking you into Callao (the finest

harbour on the west coast, but so earthquake-infested that the houses are built of wicker-work and plastered with mud, so that they cannot fall, but only waggle about in the severest and most prolonged earthquakes) I must recount a tremendous piece of fun which happened at the capture of our last whale before we reached port.

"I was not attached to any boat at that time, being considered too young and inexperienced to pull a first-rate stroke although I was entered on the ship's books as A.B. But on the day in question I was ordered into the captain's boat to replace a man who had hurt his hand with a marline-spike while splicing a heavy rope. So I was lucky enough to be in the midst of the stunning fun—as the men called it—but our skipper saw no sign of fun that day, and this was how it happened.

"Of course there is always a good deal of bustle when getting ready to start after whales. On the occasion I refer to there was extra excitement as there were a large number of whales (a 'school,' as whalemen say) in sight, and each boat's crew hoped to secure a fish to themselves.

"The man whose place I was to supply that

day pulled the stroke—that is the after oar—so that was my position as we cast off from the falls, and shipped our oars. The captain of course steered his own boat (with the usual long heavy oar) which is always the correct position for the officer in charge of a boat until his boat-steerer—who pulls the bow oar—stands up at the word of command, and does his best to dart a harpoon into poor leviathan; when this critical performance is accomplished he springs aft and takes the steer oar, and the officer assumes the difficult and dangerous task of killing the whale.

"As we shipped our oars and started on the chase, of course in my position at the after oar I was the nearest to the skipper, and I noticed that he had stowed his oil-skin coat under the loggerhead—which of course you know is chock aft—to keep it out of the way, I suppose, but the coat kept something else out of the way, of which he little dreamt.

"It only took us a short time to get into close quarters with the whales, and no doubt the intense excitement of the chase prevented the captain noticing the queer expressions of mirth, as well as a vague sort of anxiety on the men's faces, a most unusual expression for men in the

eager excitement of chasing whales. But the captain looking intently ahead watching the movements of the whales was prevented from taking notice of anything else, while we watching our oars, and looking directly aft, were suffering badly from fear of consequences, and wild, suppressed laughter.

"After a short pull of twenty minutes or thereabout, the skipper called to the boat-steerer to stand up and prepare to dart his harpoon. In a few moments we were almost touching the great monster, and were ordered to back water or we should strike the whale with our sharp stem, and most likely come to grief.

"But our skipper was too experienced a hand to make mistakes of that sort. Stopping the boat in the nick of time, he ordered the boat-steerer to dart, which he did in a very satisfactory manner, sending the harpoon clean up to the hilt in the whale's shining back. Then with three light springs the captain and boat-steerer changed positions. But there was another change of position which was not on the programme, and which almost resulted in the boat-steerer tumbling overboard with dumbfounded astonishment; for he having been in the bow of the boat, and eagerly watching for

the captain's signal to jump up and dart his harpoon, had not jaloused what the rest of us knew, namely, that Princess had stowed herself snugly abaft her father's coat, evidently with the intention of popping out at the supreme moment when the whale was struck! and this the brave little witch now did, to the utter unmanning of our boat-steerer, poor Tim Derry! so much so that the skipper had to use some strong language before Tim realized that he was being ordered to lay the boat nearer to the whale. Fortunately Tim had his wits about him sufficiently to tell the child to sit low down in the stern-sheets, lest her father should see her and have a fit, and fall on to the whale and be killed or drowned! At this fearful admonition of Tim's, Princess made herself as small as possible under her father's coat, but she could not resist the temptation of peeping out every few seconds at the mighty monster, whose capture she had risked her life to witness.

"When the dangerous operation—killing a sperm whale is always a dangerous job—was over, the captain came aft and the boat-steerer went forward to attend to his further duties. As the skipper stepped over my oar on to the stern sheets, he picked up his coat—with the

intention, I think, of putting it on, as a slight drizzle of rain was beginning to fall. But he didn't put it on! he sat down on my knees with—to me—a very painful bump, and at the same time uttering a very profane exclamation. But I know that we all thought it quite excusable under the disconcerting and totally unexpected circumstances. Our astounded skipper kept sitting on my knees—much to my inconvenience—and staring with bulging eyes at his little daughter, but never saying another word after his sudden, unconsidered ebullition, while Princess, squatting down at her father's feet, looked up in his face with no less gleaming eyes than his. Then wriggling on to her knees, and glancing at the great whale, she cried:

"'Oh father! I am so glad! I know now all about this wonderful big fishing! I don't believe a girl ever before this helped to catch a great whale. I am now like the wonderful people they put in books. I shall try to hide in your boat every time you are going to catch whales! Now, my dear father, put on your oil-skin, or you may catch cold after such violent exertions. But oh, you did look brave and handsome as you stood up with the great lance, ready to

dart, I am so glad I saw you, dear father! Now let us hurry home to the ship, for mother is sure to be looking for me everywhere, and getting anxious and worried.'

"As Princess rattled on, her father pulled himself together, and, commanding her to sit still, he seized the steer-oar, and signalled to the second mate to join us in towing the prize. That tow was a very silent, but not at all a gloomy, piece of work, for every man of us (excepting, of course, our nonplussed skipper) was nearly exploding with suppressed mirth, while Princess beamed upon us all in the most exuberant spirits, evidently well pleased with her great achievement.

* * * * *

"I have recounted that queer adventure just to show you what a curious combination our lady was. Fear, or even timidity, were qualities which had been quite neglected in her make-up. And the strangest part of it all was the fact that the child was of the gentlest and tenderest sort. With all her courage and utter lack of fear, she was a most loving and tender creature, with a passionate sympathy for all kinds of suffering. Along with this sympathy, and perhaps in consequence of it, Princess possessed a strange

gift of alleviating suffering in body or mind. I have had many proofs of this psychic power, and I am quite sure that it is simply the power of sympathy and tenderness which most people have lost in the state which is called 'civilized,' but which I have seen highly developed in those we designate 'savages.' Only, you must remember that it has nothing to do with science, or spiritualism, or such nonsense.

"I will give you an instance of this simple but wonderful power which Princess possessed, and you can form your own opinion. Mind, I am not trying to convince you one way or the other; I am only telling you of a child it was my happy fate to be shipmate with for nearly two years, and who, I know, influenced the whole of my future life much to my good.

"Once, in a stiff breeze, our fourth mate, who was with the men of his watch on the fore-top-sail-yard reefing the sail, was struck by the heavy flapping canvas, and knocked off the yard. In falling, he struck the main stay, which partly broke his fall—otherwise he would have been killed outright—but as it was he broke his left leg and arm, and was so badly injured that no one expected him to live, and he himself—poor fellow—implored the captain to slide him

overboard with a bit of pig-iron ballast to take him quickly down where he would be at once out of his misery.

"In our small community every one knew of the accident a few moments after it happened; and Princess was on the scene before any one could prevent her, or warn the child that it was not a proper sight for her to see. But she soon saw and understood what had happened, and without a moment's hesitation, she crept through the group of men (most of whom, like soft-hearted sailors, were in tears though they tried to hide it) and dropped on her knees beside the half-dead man. Laying her hands on his forehead she slowly moved them down over his eyes, a movement she kept on repeating, while she softly, but quite distinctly, said the Lord's Prayer, and it seemed to me that she said that wonderful petition in a tone and manner I had never heard before. She did not appear to notice at all the group of men by whom she was surrounded, in fact, she seemed as totally oblivious to the presence of any creature save the ghastly man to whom she was ministering, as though he and she were the only living beings on the ship.

"In a little while poor Dan Martin—that was

the man's name—lay quite still, as if his sufferings had ceased, and he seemed to be falling into sleep. Then the old doctor (we carried a medico, as most English whalers did in those days) ordered half-a-dozen men on each side to slip their hands under Dan's body, and carry him gently into the deck-house, where by removing the table, there was a good clear space to arrange a double mattress on which to lay him, and leave ample room for the doctor, and a couple of assistants to do whatever the doctor considered could be done for one whom we all supposed to be a dying man.

"While we were making these arrangements, Princess kept her hands on Dan's face, and saying words which we thought were some awful incantation, and no wonder a lot of simple seamen should think so, seeing what a strange change had come over the injured man in a few minutes. From a raving, dying man—as we supposed our shipmate to be—he was restored to calmness and rest, and a right mind, merely by the words and touch of a little child!

"Of course, the doctor was not in the least impressed by the change in Dan's condition; merely saying—in the medico's wise, superior fashion—that men suddenly and fatally injured

often fell into a comatose condition as death began to obliterate all physical sensations.

"Although the sailors did not in the least comprehend the Doctor's explanation of Dan's condition, not even understanding his learned words—yet being deeply impressed thereby, as the ignorant always are impressed by the fee-fo-fum of what is incomprehensible to them—they never questioned the perfect accuracy of his statement, and stood around with hats off, in simple sailor respect and awe, waiting to see our shipmate trip his anchor and shape his course for that unknown port from whence no voyager returns.

"Princess did not take the least notice of the doctor's prognostication, nor of the men's solemn and silent attitude. So after a bit of a pause, it seemed to dawn upon the doctor's profound mind—all doctors have profound minds according to sailor logic—that he might exercise his skill upon Dan's much broken-up body, even though the man were dying. Before beginning operations he requested her parents to remove Princess, as the sight would be too trying for the child to witness. Although our good doctor knew many scientific problems, he did not then know how wonderfully our little lady

was constituted, but he partially understood that also, along with his collection of much learned stuff, before the voyage of the *Devonport* came to an end.

"When her parents took her hands, and whispered to Princess that she must come away from Dan, as the doctor wished to set the poor man's broken bones, and perform other operations too painful for a little girl to see, she obeyed at once, and went away aft with her mother. As soon as they were gone the Doctor ordered two men to steady Dan's shoulders, and two others to keep his legs from moving, while he set the bones and bandaged them properly. But no sooner had he begun operations than Dan again broke into the same wild fit of raving as before, and with his uninjured arm he struck fiercely at the men, and bit and cried in the most dreadful manner. Our poor medico was quite nonplussed, and had to give up his operations. He even became so agitated by Dan's violence, that he sent me at once to beg Captain and Mrs. Truelove to allow Princess to try her powers upon the wounded man. Of course, her parents gave their consent, and instantly the child was again kneeling beside Dan, and gently passing her hands slowly over his forehead and face, while croon-

ing over and over words that sounded to us like prayers!

"In a few minutes Dan became quite calm and natural as before; and the Doctor without delay at once proceeded to finish the bone-setting business, and to administer such restoratives as he deemed necessary. All the while that the doctor was operating upon the injured man, we knew by the intelligence in his eyes that he was perfectly conscious. His state seemed to give the doctor a bright idea to prove some theorem or other which he had in mind. So he gently asked Princess to stand back a little, and allow one of Dan's messmates to take her place, as it would be very handy to have one ready to attend to Dan day or night. The doctor then asked Bill Waters—a good chum of Dan's—to take Princess's place, and soothe the man's pain as he had seen Princess do. Bill never hesitated, but dropped on his knees and proceeded to move his hands as softly as he could—poor fellow—over Dan's face. He had hardly got into position when he rolled over with a tremendous yell, and we perceived, to our consternation, that Dan had Bill's hand in his teeth as firm as a vice! The doctor made a move as if he were going to take Dan by the throat to choke his

mouth open, but Princess was before him, stroking Dan's forehead, and whispering in his ear. In a moment or two he let go Bill's hand, and became perfectly calm and quiet. But the unfortunate Bill kept on howling until the doctor gave him a good drink of some soothing stuff, and at once dressed his hand and put it in a sling, where Bill had to keep it for more than a month; and after that none of us tried our skill at quieting Dan. Whether the doctor proved any of his learned theories I don't know, but I know that he was very careful to have Princess with him whenever he went to change Dan's dressings.

"The doctor explained to us that Dan's tranquil state while under the influence of Princess's gentle manipulations was wholly owing to 'Odic Force,' a power exercised by some highly sensitive natures. And he told us a heap more of this sort, all in the most beautiful scientific lingo, which of course was accepted as gospel truth, after the usual humble fashion of sailor men regarding all spiritual matters.

CHAPTER III

PRINCESS AND CHIPS

"I WAS very young—especially in my feelings —in those days. Perhaps you will think it is a pity I did not remain so! But however that may be, I have learned to doubt our medicine-man's explanation of the matter—as I have learned to doubt many other things; and instead of believing that our old doctor knew all about the power which Princess possessed over Dan's body and mind, I don't think he knew a bit more of the matter than did old Chips, the ship's carpenter! I consulted Chips about it, and like inquisitive youth, asked his opinion. But he only shook his wise old head, and said that such matters should never be discussed because 'The secret things belong unto the Lord our God.'

"Chips was a very pious man, and passed more than half his watch below, diligently and slowly reading his Bible. He and Princess were great chums, and many were the confabs which they two would have while the carpenter was working at some quiet job or other, and Princess was

making little baskets out of the beautiful white shavings which Chips artistically threw off from the deliciously scented Norway pine boards he was planing for boat-mending, or some such thing.

"Their talks were frequently upon spiritual subjects. And as neither Princess nor Chips was in the least shy of being overheard, I in my position of carpenter's mate picked up a good deal of their discourse, not at all to their annoyance, and, I can testify, much to my entertainment and profit.

"A subject would be started between those two, somewhat in this fashion. Chips would say:

"'My lady!' that was how Chips always addressed Princess. 'My lady, do you understand those strange words: "All things are possible to him that believeth"?'

"Then Princess would reply, without the least hesitation, 'No, Chips, I don't understand them, but I believe them! and I think that is how our Lord meant us to consider the subject. He did not say "if thou canst understand." He only said "if thou canst believe." And surely we can believe our Lord! That is how my old teacher told me to read my Bible, Chips, and that is how I would

advise you to read yours. I think it is this way. When my father and mother tell me things which I do not understand, yet I believe the absolute truth and goodness of those things, because *they* have told those things to me! So when I read certain verses in my Bible which are beyond my comprehension, I do not wonder, and question why such things were written. I just say to myself, "That is too deep for a little girl!" and perhaps it is too deep for big girls, and even for learned men: and maybe it was only written for the guidance of angels when they are sent to earth with messages, and become puzzled by the stupidity of us all, and the evil and sin in the world.'

"Then Chips would smile in his inscrutable way, and reply:

"'Ah weel, Princess! I canna improve upon your lucid dissertation, and it's always a marvel to me how and where you learned all your wonderful knowledge and wisdom! Here am I, who have been studying the *Book*, and a wheen o' other things which are miscalled books, for more than fifty years! and I sair misdoot if I have learned half of the wise things that you have gathered into that bonnie wee heid o' yours, in a dizen short years!'

"Princess engaged much more freely in talks with Chips than with any one else on the ship—excepting, of course, her parents. Partly, I think, for the profound knowledge and humble faith which she found in the old Scotchman, and partly for the old-fashioned grace and courtesy of his manner, which he never forgot when addressing the little lady.

* * * * *

"Perhaps you may think that in my record of Princess I am inventing an impossible sort of child in manner, thought, and mode of expression, etc. But the fact is that I am not making up her characteristics at all. I am merely describing, as clearly as I can from memory, 'Princess' Truelove. That she was not as other children are I am quite well aware: if she had been, I should not be telling you about her. How training, and surroundings, or inherited qualities had made her different from all other children I have met, I do not know. I am merely speaking of Princess as I knew her, not of the abstruse science of psychology.

"After this digression, I must go back to my sample of the little lady's endless talks with her friend the carpenter.

"'Chips!' Princess would quietly retort on

such occasions, 'Chips! you should never flatter any one with foolish compliments. Firstly because it is harmful to the complimenter, as well as to the complimented, and secondly because it is nearly always more or less untrue. Mind you, Chips, I do not say it is altogether untrue in the present case, for I inherited things which made me different from other children. And my environment—that 's a correct word, is it not, Chips?'

"'Quite correct, my lady,' responds Chips humbly.

"'Well, I am glad of that, for I always wish to use correct words when I am speaking seriously; of course it is different when one is making fun, but this is not fun to-day.

"'My environment until I was ten years of age was such as gave me ideas and thoughts: but maybe "ideas" and "thoughts" mean the same. Do they, Chips?'

"'Yes—almost—at least they do in Scotland.'

"'I am sorry for that, because they always seemed to mean different things to me in Jersey (that is the island where I come from), and "thought" always seemed to me to be something tangible, a thing I could lay hold of, while "idea" was only a fleeting shadow crossing

my mind like a light, summer cloud crossing the sky.

"'Thinketh and thought are the same words, are they not, Chips,—only one is present and the other past tense?'

"'Aye!' said Chips, 'you have put it just like a school mistress.'

"'Very well, then,' continued Princess, 'the wisest man that ever lived wrote these words with regard to men: "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he"; therefore thought must be altogether a different and a stronger thing than the slight, fanciful thing we call an idea!' Then after a pause, while she devoted her close attention to basket-making, Princess took up the thread of her discourse.

"'Perhaps my peculiarities and peccadilloes—peccadilloes is not a very wicked word, is it, Chips?' parenthetically queries Princess.

"'Oh no!' responds Chips, 'it's no very bad."

"I *am* so glad of that! for my father says I am a terrible child for peccadilloes. Now I suppose you would call it a peccadillo when I hid myself in the boat, and saw the great whale captured?'

"Even the carpenter's usually well-maintained propriety was not proof against this great provocation, and he exploded with a short, sharp

guffaw before he could pull himself together: and of course, I, being a youngster, easily moved to mirth in those days, broke into a paroxysm which I pretended was a severe fit of coughing, and clapping my cap tight over my mouth, rushed to the lee rail, and there relieved my over-charged feelings. I was no sooner better, than our good old doctor, passing at the moment, clapped me kindly on the back, saying that he was sorry to see I had such a bad cough, and that he would give me a good mixture to drink after supper. And he did, and I drank it like a good boy, as I was then; I am not so docile nowadays, alas! so much more 's the pity.

"When I came back to my job, both Chips and Princess were calm though smiling, and in a little while my lady went quietly on with her talk.

"'I must tell you, Chips, that I was born on the Island of Jersey; and natives of that lovely Channel Island have many peculiarities of their own, but they are an honest, brave, kindly people with it all. So no doubt it was good for me that my life began on that little rock-bound and sea-girt dot of land. My upbringing was what you might call "promiscuous." Perhaps you don't know exactly what I mean? Well! I mean that I was not trained like other children.

My mother is a very gentle person, and my father in those days being very much away at sea, and our domestic affairs being managed by one faithful domestic, I was left pretty much to "the devices and desires of my own heart" as the Prayer Book says.

"'Our house was situated in a lovely district of the Island, on the hills above Mont Orgueil Castle. Not far from our house there was a fine old cromlech, and it being a very retired and quiet place, I often went there to pray. Now, Chips, you have cromlechs in your country, so you can tell me if it was wicked of me to pray in a cromlech. My mother and our good old servant did not seem to mind, merely, I suppose, looking upon it all as childish games. But I should very much like to know what you think, Chips, for it has often troubled my mind since.'

"'My lady, it all depends upon what mind you worshipped with in your cromlech. If you prayed there thinking that your prayers would be heard *because* you offered them there, then I should say they were not wickeder than half the prayers that are offered up every Sabbath day; but I fear your prayers did not go beyond the Druid's stone over your head. Mind you,

my lady, I am not judging for one moment the Druid's prayers, they worshipped according to their lights—while we have the *Light* of the world to direct us—and it matters not one whit *where* we pray, but it matters very much *how* we pray. Early in the Christian era, kings and emperors, and those sort of people, frequently changed great public buildings (basilicas they were called) into Christian churches. Now many persons are of opinion that it is wrong to make any building into a church unless it has been built from the foundation for that purpose, but we must remember: "Thus saith the Lord, the Heaven is my throne, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me? and where is the place of my rest?"'

"'Ah, Chips, I wish I knew as much as you! But my education was so scrappy that it is a wonder how I get along at all. Now I suppose you went to splendid schools, and afterwards to Oxford, or Cambridge?' Here another violent paroxysm would seize Chips and me, and almost bring on a fit in suppressing it, while Princess calmly and sweetly proceeded.

"'While I was quite a little child I used to attend a queer bit of a school kept by an old priest. He was said to be a very learned man, but of

that I never was a judge; however, I do know that Père Latour was a very good man, and used the most beautiful language, which I always tried to imitate. There were usually ten or a dozen girls attending the Père's school. They were just the ordinary sort of farmers' and fishermen's children; so you can imagine that our teacher must have been a good manager to keep a lot of half-grown girls in order, and make them learn their lessons. But Père Latour —as I have said—was not only a good manager, he was also a great scholar, and a good man, and we all loved him as well as feared him. He had only one mode of punishment (besides a stern look of disapproval, which we greatly dreaded) and that punishment was very dreadful and effectual. There was only once when it became necessary to exercise it during all the years I attended his school. And I am most thankful that it was only exercised once, for it nearly killed me with grief, and the Father gave us all a week's holiday, as we were too depressed to do anything but weep. This awful punishment was expulsion. As I say, it was only put in force once during all the years I was in the school, but it was so terrible that it makes me shudder yet whenever I think of it.

"'The Père ordered us all to stand up in our places, and Martha Renaud (that was the name of the girl who was expelled) to stand in front of his table. Then after a short lecture—which no girl who was present that day will ever forget—he commanded Martha to depart, and *never to return*! Every girl fell upon her knees as if her heart were breaking. And that was the only punishment ever inflicted in Père Latour's little school. But it was so dreadful that Martha ran away from home that night, and hid in a French fishing boat that was lying in St. Catherine Bay, and so made her escape to Brittany, and was never heard of again!'

* * * * *

"I have recalled to mind these trifling incidents of a long past day," said Kinross—while I protested that they were not trifling at all, but most important events—at which my old friend would smile in his quiet way, and proceed.

"Ah well! it all depends upon how you look at them. Of course to me they constitute some of the most highly cherished and important memories of my life! But as I was going to say just now when you interrupted me, I have recalled these things to show you that Princess was one of the uncommon sort, but altogether

a most lovable child, in spite of her half-wild ways, and rather unconventional actions, besides the strange power which she undoubtedly possessed of allaying pain by some sympathetic quality in her mind and hands! It was nothing less than marvellous how she managed to soothe poor Dan Martin. Time after time when he got utterly beyond the control of the Doctor, if little Princess came along—which she did whenever she was sent for by day or night—and laid her hands on the much-suffering body, and soothed the sorely tormented spirit, Dan would calm down like a lost child that had found its mother after long wandering. And then, murmuring half articulate, loving, and thankful words, would fall into the blessedness of unconscious sleep!

"I must tell you that Dan Martin quite recovered from his dreadful accident: and before he was done with the case, the Doctor freely admitted that without the aid of Princess his skill would have been utterly powerless to pull the man through.

CHAPTER IV

SHADOWS

"After cruising about the south east Pacific for nearly a year and falling in with very good luck, our captain decided that it was time to call at Callao, and so for that celebrated port our course was shaped, and in due time we anchored in the old Spanish haven. Callao is by no means the best harbour in the world, but it is the best harbour which Peru possesses. It is a place which is very subject to earthquakes, but it is a place where it never rains oftener than once in a hundred years or so, and even when it does rain, it is merely a light shower as a rule. But the unexpected happens sooner or later, and it happened while we were there.

"One afternoon, with hardly any warning, rain began to fall! The Spaniards at first ran about laughing and joking, but in a short time they changed their tune to crying and wringing their hands. As I mentioned before, the houses in Callao are built like wicker baskets and nicely covered with plaster, and made to look very pretty both inside and out. It is capital archi-

tecture to resist earthquakes, but a very poor style to resist rain. The roofs are flat, and will shed or absorb the light showers, or rather mists, to which they are accustomed on the west coast. But that day it was rain such as no living man had ever seen (although to us it only seemed an extra good shower), and within an hour rain and mud had done more damage to beautiful household furniture than earthquakes had done in a hundred years. So you see there are drawbacks even in the romantic and rich country of Peru. Which puts me in mind," said Kinross, "of what our old country-woman said to a neebour crony, when recounting all her married daughter's blessings. She had cows, and hens, and a bonnie hoose, etc., '*but*,' added the old lady, 'Meg canna thole her man, but there's aye something in this warld!'

"When we reached Callao our captain found a despatch from the ship's owners directing him to send his chief mate (John Maitland) home, as he was required to testify in an important case involving a large sum of money to the firm. The captain was further directed to consult the ship's agents in Callao, and with their approval to ship in Maitland's place the most suitable man obtainable. The owners stated

that they personally would have preferred to promote the second officer to the post of chief, but as he was a very young man for such a responsible position, and as he did not hold a chief mate's certificate, it was advisable to ship a new man altogether. So the business proceeded with its far-reaching consequences, as all events in this life—however inconsequential they may seem at the moment—proceed with their certain consequence of good or evil.

"A few days afterwards a boat came alongside, with a handsome and very well dressed man. In a polite and easy way—but with a slightly foreign accent—he asked for our captain, and was soon in close confab with him.

"In the days I am telling you of, ships' companies were much more carefully selected than they are nowadays when English ships are often manned with worthless trash from every point of the compass. In the old days owners of ships which were bound upon long voyages like the *Devonport*, were always extra careful to select first-rate men, both with regard to seamanship and character, men with first-class records. Of course, upon long voyages vacancies frequently occurred, when a captain had just to

pick up the best he could find. In the present instance, however, the agents produced such a bundle of splendid certificates that our skipper thought himself most lucky to procure the services of Mr. Louis Marchand.

"After their talk, the captain and the gentleman who we supposed was our new mate came forward looking at things in general, and, I remember thinking, looking at us men in particular. After an inspection much longer than necessary—I thought—the stranger asked the captain to muster the crew, saying that he always liked to see the men he was going to be shipmates with. When we were all mustered the skipper made a little speech, introducing Mr. Marchand as our future chief mate, and hoping that we would obey him cheerfully. So commenced my acquaintance with Mr. Louis Marchand, but so it did not end.

"After a little more looking around, and being introduced to Mrs. Truelove and Princess, our new officer took himself off to arrange his shore affairs before taking up his new duties.

"In a couple of weeks we completed our business in Callao, shipped all necessary supplies, and started upon another cruise. I learned through the second mate, who was a chum of

mine, that the new mate had advised our captain to try what he called 'the eastern middle ground,' as it was a likely position to find sperm whales at that time of year—January, February, and March.

"The position Mr. Marchand recommended was some three or four hundred miles to the westward of the Galapagos Islands, and a degree or two north and south of the line. Our captain, no doubt thinking, as the agents had assured him, that his new mate was a good authority on all whaling lore, decided to take his advice. So when we had managed to creep and drift about a hundred miles clear of the land—it is always slow work for a sailing ship on the calm sea which extends up and down the Peruvian coast—the ship's head was turned north-west, and we slowly made our way towards the Line.

"After leaving Callao Chips again took up his usual work, which had been interrupted by the various affairs in port. The particular job which was engaging his attention at the time I refer to was a little table for Princess's stateroom. Chips had known beforehand—by many whispered communications from Princess—of this piece of artistic work that was awaiting his

deft hands: and when we were in Callao he had secured some beautiful pieces of red cedar, greatly to Princess's delight, who made many expeditions in company with him to a timber yard where various kinds of fine woods were on sale, and at last they made their selections and brought on board, in great triumph, several beautiful pieces.

"Chips had a nice bit of awning rigged up over where he worked at his various jobs, and as none of the crew were allowed to loiter about when he was at work excepting the man told off to assist him, and as Princess always saw to it that I was the man, I had a very happy time during the construction of Princess's table, and many other things, during that memorable voyage. And I know that I gained a lot of solid information from Chips and Princess upon subjects which are not often heard by young men nowadays, more's the pity!

"For instance, one morning Princess seemed much pre-occupied by something or other on her mind, and at last she said to the carpenter—in a low, awed voice, which was not at all usual to her:

"'Chips! do you think that God will burn

living men and women for ever and ever, and never allow them to die! nor for one moment allow them rest or ease from their misery through all the endless ages of eternity? If *you* believe that, I don't think it is worth while going on with the table, for I will have no pleasure in it, and indeed I fear I never shall have pleasure in anything again! My mother and I were reading a chapter this morning, as we do every morning, and we read that chapter where Christ said:

"'"It is better for thee to enter halt into life, than having two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that never shall be quenched."

"'Do *you* believe that, Chips?' interrogated Princess, with a shiver in her voice. 'My mother believes it! and it does not seem to hurt her very much, but I cannot bear it when I think of all the world, and of Martha, whom I told you about! Do you *really* believe it, Chips?' interrogated Princess again, with tearful eyes and trembling voice.

"'No! my lady,' responded Chips, in a quiet, firm tone, 'I do *not*! And when I come to that text, I just read on, and forbear to think upon or discuss what is not comprehensible—unless we attribute it to a mistake of the transcribers.

There is another verse which refers to this terrible subject, a verse which I fully understand. It is this:

"'"The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear his voice; and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." My good old schoolmaster in Dundee, to whose birch and Latin I submitted until I was thirteen years of age—when I ran away to sea, poor wee fool!—always told us boys, when we read this verse, that "damnation" meant "death," in contradistinction to the word "Life." Now Peter Wishart was a very learned, as well as a very good, man, and never did or said any thing that was likely to mislead man, woman, or child. Therefore I believe that the wicked, who refuse all good and mercy so freely offered to the very worst, "shall come forth to the resurrection of 'Death.'" A woeful doom! but which we know must be *just*, as well as *merciful*—for God cannot be otherwise.

"'At many times our Lord made this awful matter very clear. For instance, in this text: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, if a man keep my

saying, he shall never see death." Now, when our Lord said these words, he knew perfectly well that all men *must die*—that is, as we understand death. But what he must have meant was that those who did not believe Him would fall into that eternal death which Adam, by his disobedience, admitted into this once happy, but now sorrowful, world.' [1]

"'Oh, thank you so much, Chips! You have taken a great pain off my mind. I shall continue to pray for the wicked—as I have always done, ever since Martha was expelled—but you have now taught me that God is of infinite mercy, as well as infinite justice.' Princess dried her eyes, and, with a half smile, continued: 'We can now go on with the table, Chips! I feel my interest and love for it coming back.' And we did go on, and a very beautiful table it turned out to be. And the day we fitted it into Princess's room all hands had plum duff, and thanked Princess and Chips properly.

"And so cleared our little lady's trouble of mind for that day. But there were always

[1] I think it would be profitable for us all were we to act as the noble Bereans acted—namely, "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so."

questions cropping up on all sorts of subjects, and never a problem seemed too deep or intricate for wise old Chips to unravel.

"We slowly worked our way northward in the most delightful weather. There is a great Antarctic current sweeping up from the south on the Peruvian coast, which gives a delicious coolness to the air, very grateful in those low latitudes.

"The fine weather was taken advantage of to give the ship a general overhaul: and unfortunately—as I thought—the various jobs to be attended to needed all hands, the carpenter included. So there were few chances for Princess and Chips to have a quiet time for exchanging views on all manner of topics, much to their own satisfaction, and my delight and edification.

"One day, however, the carpenter had been set to re-fitting the harpoon poles, which had become loose by shrinking in the long spell of warm dry weather. I was told off to work with him, and we had not long established ourselves on the topgallant forecastle, when Princess made her way through the bustle on the main deck, and joined us. The little lady was unusually quiet that morning, merely saying, 'Good morning, Chips! Good morning, David!' and

then sitting down on a coil of rope in the shade of the fore-stay-sail. 'Good morning, my lady!' said Chips, 'is there anything the matter this beautiful morning, my lady?'

"'Yes, there is!' returned Princess, in a quiet, sad tone, "something very much the matter, and if I can put my thoughts into words, I will try to tell you what it is.'

"Then she sat quite still for awhile, watching Chips as he shaved a pole into a fine sharp point, trying it every few minutes to see how it fitted into the harpoon. At last the little lady broke her unusual silence:

"'Chips! Do you believe this: "As he thinketh in his heart, so is he"?'

"'Yes! I do believe it, my lady. I believe that the thoughts of the heart *are* the man!'

"At this Princess looked more distressed than I ever saw her before, and after a while she said: 'I once read in a book that it is impossible to deceive a *dog* or a *child*. I did not pay much attention to this when I read it, for it is many years ago, and I was only a little child, but I often think of it now when I am growing old! I will be twelve years of age on the twenty-first of next month if I live till then.'

"Chips glanced at the child as she said this,

and then worked hard at a lance-pole, but said never a word. Princess came a bit closer to Chips and me, sat down on a little tool-chest in which he kept his small tools, and, quietly looking at Chips, went on with her further interrogations.

"'Now I should like very much to have your opinion of what I read—"that you cannot deceive a *dog* or a *child*"! Please give me your serious attention, Chips, for it is a very serious question.'

"Chips stopped planing, and, looking quite solemnly into the little lady's eyes, said:

"'I believe exactly what you read, my lady. No one can deceive a dog or a child, because naturally there is no deception in either of these two creatures, therefore they only see the *truth*. Of course, I mean those which have not been spoiled by bad usage.'

"'Then,' said Princess, almost in a whisper, and leaning towards us, 'I want to warn you and David regarding Mr. Marchand! He is an evil man, and intends things; what they are I do not know, but that he intends evil things, I know! And my mother's little King Charles, "Pet," he knows also, for he growls at Mr. Marchand whenever he sees the man, and you

know how good the little dog is, and that he loves every man on the ship excepting this evil one.'

"Without another word Princess left us, and went away aft, picking her way along the decks lumbered up with all kinds of whaling gear, sails, ropes, and odds and ends of all sorts. As she was climbing over some extra high piles of rope, Mr. Marchand held out his hand to help her, but Princess, taking not the slightest notice of the proffered assistance, leaped lightly past the obstruction, and left him with a very ugly scowl on his face, although usually he was more given to smiling than to frowning. But as I looked at him, Princess's verse came into my mind, 'as a man thinketh in his heart, so is he.' And that was not the last time his evil face recalled the text.

* * * * *

"We sighted whales several times on our way north, but we were not lucky enough to take any until we sighted the Galapagos Islands; then we fell in with large schools, and secured two big ones, which turned out ten tons apiece of the finest oil, besides a large quantity of spermaceti—a very valuable commodity obtained from the whale's head ('case,' whalemen call it).

"We caught our fish to the westward of the Galapagos, with the high peaks of the Islands dipping. And as the whales were travelling north-west, we also shaped our course that way, hoping to keep in touch with them and pick up a few more rich prizes. And we did manage to secure three more, before the last of the great schools finally disappeared. So we did very well in the whaling line during the first few months after leaving Callao, but we did very poorly from a sociable point of view. In fact, after we left Callao there seemed to be a shadow of some sinister portent hanging over the ship both fore and aft. There were fewer songs of an evening on the forecastle head, and even the few that were sung were of the sad sort, and rarely of those kinds with a rousing chorus which are as a rule the most welcome to seamen.

"Princess and her mother still kept up their habit of songs and studies on the little piano in the cabin, but they also seemed to me much less joyous than formerly. Even Captain Truelove, although usually a jolly, cheerful man, who wished his ship's company to be happy and contented, fell into a gloomy sort of habit, and would pass long spells hanging over the rail,

speaking to no one, and taking little interest in the ship's course, the wind, scanning the horizon for a whale's spout, or any one of the many things which used to engage his attention.

"The change was very noticeable in Princess. She completely gave up all her old innocent pranks. Never went aloft, or stood a trick at the wheel—a thing she could do as well as any man on the ship, if there was not too stiff a breeze. In fact, the little lady seemed quite another sort of girl from the cheerful lass whom we all loved! At this time she did not favour Chips and me with much of her company, and when she did come our way, she would sit for half an hour at a time without saying a word, and hardly taking the slightest interest in our work; whereas formerly she never ceased asking Chips all manner of questions about whatever job we had on hand, until she would be as thoroughly posted about the matter as we were ourselves.

"Sometimes Chips would try to arouse her old interest in our work, or in books. Chips was an exceedingly well-read man, first and foremost in the Bible, and secondly in history, geography, and all sorts of solid literature. And he had that indispensable qualification of a well-

read man, a retentive memory. Chips told me how he acquired this invaluable possession. He said that when he was a wee fellow he used to watch his father take whichever book he wished to read from one of the shelves in the little sitting-room in the old cottage in Dundee. And when he had found and read what he wished, he always laid the book carefully back in its place. From this act of his father's the boy formed the notion that he also had some shelves, but they were in his head, and ever after, when he read something which he wished to remember, he laid it upon one of his mental shelves. And he assured me that from this quaint conceit he built up his wonderfully tenacious memory.

CHAPTER V

THE END OF THE LAST CRUISE

"We cruised west of the Islands for two or three months, and continued to have fairly good luck, barring a few accidents. One mishap that happened at that time was the smashing to pieces of the mate's boat by a particularly vicious whale, some of the crew being injured a

little, and the mate having his arm so badly hurt that he had to keep it in a sling, and so was obliged to give up boat duty. It therefore followed that the captain took to going in chase of whales himself, and leaving the mate in charge of the ship. In this way came the opportunity which always comes sooner or later both for evil and for good in this strangely arranged—or rather disarranged—world of joy and sorrow, of angels and fiends who are ceaselessly contending in a fierce struggle of life and death, and the prizes they are fighting for are the souls of men!

"After we had been in the north between three and four months, we had a spell of the queerest weather I ever encountered. There was hardly any wind, but there was a strange sort of fog you could feel with your hands, as well as see with your eyes. Sometimes bright sunbeams would burst out for a few hours, and then down would come the clammy fog again. And withal the glass kept persistently down about twenty-eight. It was the sort of weather that sailors call 'foxy,' which means that it is impossible to foretell what to expect next.

"On the third day of this disagreeable weather we ran into a great school of whales. I never

experienced such a strange condition of whale-life before or since during all my long sea life.

"All around us, wherever we could get a glimpse of the water as the thick clammy fog would lift for a moment, the sea was simply alive with whales! What with the noise of spouting, slapping of flukes, and clashing of jaws, in anger or sport, it was something like the confused jumble of a busy street at a little distance. Every few minutes a great monster would rub along the ship's side, making the stout old craft shiver! Evidently the whales mistook us for a good rock against which to rub off their barnacles—a process which whales are clever enough to adopt on coasts where the water is deep, and the rocks suitable for their purpose.

"This curious entertainment continued for a couple of days, while the captain and crew fretted and fumed at the splendid opportunities that we were forced to forgo, on account of the strange conditions of weather; it being altogether too dangerous for boats to venture into the clammy darkness, where flag signals would be utterly useless, and the only sound signals we possessed were our voices, and the ship's bell.

"After three days of it the fog lifted as suddenly as it had fallen, and a light breeze came up from the south-west. Whales were still in sight, but they had taken themselves off to a safe distance, having found out, I suppose, that our ship was not a solid rock, and so, suspecting danger, had passed the word around, and withdrawn to a safe distance. The whales were dead to windward, some four or five miles away, but the wind was light, and the order being given to lower away, we were soon in a bustle of preparation getting ready to go in chase.

"All our four boats were lowered, the captain going in his own, and the second, third, and fourth mates taking their respective boats. Of course the mate with his disabled arm could not take charge of a boat, so he was left in charge of the ship, with eleven hands. But of these eleven one was the carpenter, who had long ceased going aloft, one was the steward, another the cook, and still another was the old doctor, who was quite useless as far as ship's work was concerned, however clever he might be—with Princess's assistance—at splicing Dan's bones. The rest were even younger lads than myself, and entered on the ship's books as ap-

prentices, and in feelings and character mere boys.

"It was getting rather late in the afternoon when the four boats got away on the chase, two drawing away almost due south, and two going a little more westerly. Just before the captain jumped on the rail to swing himself into the boat, Princess caught his arm, and as I stood ready with the fall in my hand to lower away at the word of command, I heard every word she said.

"'Don't go, father! There is a great trouble at my heart! Don't leave the ship to-day! There is sorrow and evil near—don't go away!"

"'Come, come, my lass! what is the matter? My brave girl, I must get a whale to-day, and you must keep the ship for me! My brave Princess must not show the white feather. Good-bye, my pet!' and he swung himself into the boat, and gave the order, 'Lower away handsomely!'

"Princess turned away aft, sobbing convulsively! It was the first time I ever saw the brave little girl break down so completely, and this, together with the words I had just heard, filled my heart with a strange awe and foreboding of evil.

"We lay quietly with the main-top-sail aback, until the boats were two or three miles away. Then the mate ordered me to put the helm hard-up, and as I did so, he set the others to haul round the main-yard, and the breeze being very light, five or six boys with the carpenter were just able to do this, and it was done none too soon. For we had scarcely got the ship before the wind when a sudden tropical squall of wind and rain struck us so fiercely that every stitch of canvas, and every rope and spar, creaked and strained as though they were at the snapping point. But it soon moderated, the sky cleared, and the wind dropped again to a light sou'-west breeze which sent the ship along at five or six knots. Of course the captain had reduced our canvas before he left, knowing that the ship would only be manageable under small sail while all the crew were away, and only the boys and two or three capable men left to manage the sails. We had the fore, the main-top-sails, spanker, and jib set, each sail with a single reef, for safety in case of squalls.

"As the rattle and confusion of the squall subsided, I had spare time to look about me and examine things a bit. I fully expected the mate to order all hands to clap on to the braces,

preparatory to ordering me to put the wheel to port, and so bring the ship to the wind, and work slowly towards the boats. But he gave no such order, and when I ventured to ask him if I should put the wheel over, he only growled that I had better keep my suggestions to myself, and keep the ship's head dead before the wind if I did not want to capsize her!

"I could not understand the fellow at all. It even crossed my foolish young mind that the man had suddenly gone mad; and another thing which doubly alarmed me was the fact that I saw he had a couple of revolvers in a belt under his coat! So you may be sure that I kept very quiet, as the fellow ordered me. Only once, when I got a chance, I made a furtive signal to Chips, whom I saw speaking to Princess near the mizzen-rigging. In a little while they both turned aft, but before they reached me, Mr. Marchand stopped the carpenter, directing him to attend to his duties forward, and then telling Princess to keep with her mother in the cabin, as it was dangerous for her to be on deck in such squally weather.

"It was a strange situation! The strangest I have ever experienced during a wide wandering and adventurous life. The sea perfectly calm,

the sky clear, and a gentle breeze sending the ship along five or six knots an hour, and the officer in charge ordering me to keep the ship's head directly away from where we knew our boats were, although by this time they were out of sight from the deck—and the officer never sending a man aloft to ascertain where our boats and shipmates were; in fact, coolly sailing away from them! Then—what seemed to my boyish mind another outrage—ordering our respected old carpenter off the poop as if he were a drunken swab who had no right there, when as a matter of fact Chips was the most trustworthy man on the ship, and in the course of his duty had a right to go anywhere fore or aft, and beautiful Princess—who had the run of everywhere high and low, and who was always treated with the greatest respect and consideration by every soul on board—ordered to her cabin as though she were an irresponsible, foolish child!

"But Mr. Marchand made a blunder when he attempted to command our Princess, and he presently heard some plain opinions of himself, and a warning of the dire doom which the child declared was approaching.

"'Mr. Marchand!' said Princess, looking the

mate steadily in the eyes, and never moving a step at his insulting command.

"'Mr. Marchand! you are in command of this ship at the present moment, but you are not in command of me! and I warn you—before it is too late—that I know what you are trying to do. You are trying to run away with the ship, and leaving my father and his men to perish! I have long known you to be a wicked man, but I did not know that you were cruel enough to do this dreadful thing.'

Here the little lady's eyes filled with tears, her lips quivered, and I thought she would quite break down, but she recovered herself in a few moments, and never blinking a jot before the mate's fierce, savage stare, she calmly proceeded with her awful accusation and warning!

"'Mr. Marchand! There are two courses open for you. Bring the ship to the wind—brace the yards sharp up, go back and save twenty-four men from a miserable death. If you do this I promise you—as I hope for mercy—never to speak to my father on this subject. The other course is for you to go on your own wicked way: but that way is to your woeful doom—*eternal death*!'

"Princess turned away with a wonderfully dig-

nified gesture, as though she were truly a born princess, or rather a prophetess, and not the wild little girl of twelve years of age, which no doubt Mr. Marchand thought her to be.

"The mate said never a word, but, merely scowling a little more than before, ordered me to change the ship's course half a point, which I think was only to appear calmer than he really was in his black heart.

"You may wonder why twelve hands, even though most of them were mere boys, allowed a single man to leave their shipmates to a miserable fate, without at least making an effort to frustrate his evil intentions. But you have to take one or two things into consideration. Firstly, it has always been considered a dreadful crime for a crew to rise upon their officer under almost any circumstances, and it was thought even a greater crime in former years than now. Besides this dread of future consequences, the man we had to deal with was armed with two revolvers ostentatiously displayed in his belt, and we knew quite well that there was not another gun of any kind in the ship. Another point against us was the fact that our mate was a powerful man in full possession of all his faculties—for the fellow had taken his arm out of the

sling, and we all suspected the hurt arm had only been a ruse, and that he had merely been playing possum for his own rascally ends.

"Chips was the only man who could have led us in a revolt, and he was past the fighting age and for the moment advocated caution: thinking that Marchand—villain though we all knew him to be—had some plan in his mind of rounding up the boats in some fashion we did not comprehend. Besides, as Chips said, the mate was the only man left who understood navigation, and if we did overpower him, and get possession of the ship, it would be ten chances to one that we ever picked up the boats, as the mate had changed the ship's course several times since we lost sight of them, no doubt with a view of confusing all hands.

"So the time for action passed. I saw the mate talking to Mrs. Truelove, no doubt telling her he was doing all in his power to find the missing boats, and, I suppose, she half believing him, poor woman. He never dared to speak to clear-minded Princess again, and gave her a wide berth whenever she was on deck.

"On the third day of this state of things, the wind suddenly dropped, and we lay becalmed for several hours, the sails flapping lazily as the

ship rolled on the long westerly swell, which kept on increasing. This long rolling swell, with which all sailors in those seas are more or less familiar, originates in the China Sea, and travels across the Pacific until it exhausts its energy on the coasts of America. Of course it is caused by storms, or rather hurricanes, in the far west. These wild storms sometimes blow *home*—as sailors say—but generally after leaving the hurricane-infested China Sea, it is only the harmless swell which reaches the Pacific Islands and the American coast. But sometimes the storm follows the sea, and this was one of the *sometimes*!

Slowly at first, and then swifter and denser the hazy mist, which precedes dirty weather in the tropics, came rolling up from the westward: and as our mate evidently expected a bad blow, he ordered in a spanker, and set about taking two reefs in the fore and main-top-sails. All of which were easy enough jobs for us in the almost dead calm. But we were none too soon, for we had hardly completed reefing the heavy sails, and hoisting the top-sail yards into place again when the first of the storm struck us so fiercely that if we had not shortened sail as expeditiously as we had done, the masts would have been taken out of the ship, or she would have been

knocked on her beam-ends, and probably sent to the bottom.

"But the end was not to be yet. In the nick of time we got the ship's head dead before the gale, and then, with her small show of canvas, she went comfortably enough.

"Although we knew by this time that the mate was a murderer and a pirate, yet we could not but admire his clever seamanship. Not a motion of the ship, or the slightest change of wind or sea escaped his notice. And although even his callous mind must have been in a turmoil of fear and anxiety, yet not the merest trifle on board escaped his instant observation.

"During our three days' run before that gale, Marchand hardly slept a wink. When he did go to his state-room for a little while, we knew he locked his door, and at such times was our only chance of securing the man. But it would have taken braver men than we were to tamper with that door, and the desperate man behind it, armed with two deadly revolvers, and no doubt plenty of ammunition. As I said, he never went often or stayed long in his room—and those were the only few minutes he could have slept —and it was perfectly astonishing how little sleep he must have had during those last days,

and yet he was as bright and alert as the youngest boy on the ship.

"I know now, when I reflect upon that terrible adventure, that Marchand must have had some well-defined plans arranged before ever he shipped with us. What these plans were will, I suppose, remain one of the unsolved mysteries of the sea. I have no doubt he had confederates somewhere on the coast, or on the Galapagos Islands, but of that I never learned a whisper.

"We fled before the storm for three days, with nights as black as pitch, and days almost as dark. Of course we could get no sights, and could only guess roughly at our whereabouts while driving on before the gale like a lost seagull with bedraggled wings. Some of our sails had broken loose from the gaskets and there only remained fluttering fragments of canvas scattered along the bolt-ropes—like little flags of distress, I remember thinking!

"During that strange time, I cannot recall to mind whether we young fellows held any consultations, or attempted to form any plans of action. It seems to me now, when I reflect upon it, that our immature minds were so completely dazed by the tragedy and awful wickedness of the crime in which we were unwittingly involved,

that our brains were unable to form proper ideas, and we only acted mechanically, as poor dumb things perform certain tasks without in the least realizing their meaning or result. Even Chips—when I got him in the shelter of the galley where we were clear of the mate's sharp eyes for a few moments—seemed quite unable to give me any advice or direction as to our future conduct. His one admonition was, 'Pray without ceasing—in your heart!' Then he added, laying his hand on my arm, 'The end is near at hand.'

"These were the last words I ever heard my old friend speak, but I saw him once again, thank God!

"The night following our third miserable day, the wind had dropped a bit, though it still blew a gale, and never a star broke through the black sky to afford us a gleam of hope for fair weather so that we might be enabled to find our position even approximately. We knew that we must be in the neighbourhood of the Galapagos, but whether they were north or south, or dead ahead, no man knew for certain. Under such circumstances a judicious man would have hove-to, even if it were risky to bring the ship round in such an awful sea and tearing wind. But

Marchand was not a judicious man now, whatever he had been in some past time, and he never changed the course one jot—and the good ship drove on to her doom, and each one of us to his own place!

"About midnight the gloom became an intenser blackness, if that were possible, and I knew that we were overshadowed by some terrible thing, more tangible than the darkness of the storm.

"I have never lived out of sight and sound of the sea since babyhood. All my ancestors were more familiar with the sea than with the land. So I may say I was bred and born of the sea. I know its voice in cries of rage and fight, as well as in its whispers of love and peace: it has no secret sound or motion I do not understand.

"Thus when we passed from the gloom of the storm into utter blackness, and the fierce wind almost lifted me from the deck in its rush upward, I knew that we had run under great overhanging cliffs. These facts flashed instinctively through my mind, but before I had time to act, or even to think connectedly—with a sound as though the overhanging darkness fell with a crash of doom upon us, our great, stout

ship was gone—like a child's toy in the roar and rush of Niagara!

"On that sheer rockbound coast where we struck, the ship crashed her bows in up to the fore-mast, and went like a stone, many a long fathom down. I was caught on a column of water (that rushed upward like a water-spout from the sinking ship) and thrown high on the upper ledge of the cliff.

"As I clung to the rock, half dead, but with the instinct of self-preservation which never leaves a man while his reason remains, I felt something move under my hands, and a horror seized me lest some evil creature of the land should take the life which the sea had spared. Ere I had time to withdraw my hands, they were caught and held fast by little fingers which I knew full well, although in the darkness I could not see a stime.

"'David!' whispered the voice in my ear, 'are we dead! and where is mother? She was holding my hand when the great sea swallowed us up. Speak to me, David, if you can, or shall I ask God?' I smoothed back the tangled hair from her face, and told the child that she must keep hold of me, and that we must be ready to cling to the rock if the waves came near us

again: we could do nothing more to save ourselves, or others, until daydawn.

"In that latitude—just under the Line—we did not suffer much from the cold, and although our clothing was both torn and wringing wet, we did not have the additional misery of intense cold—as so many shipwrecked people have to endure—or Princess and I should have perished that night. But even in that mild climate the child soon began to shiver in the cool air toward morning. Fortunately I had on my oil-skin coat when I was cast on the rocks, and although it was pretty well tattered, I wrapped her up in its fragments, and held her little body in my arms, and thanked God in my heart when she whispered, 'David, I am quite warm!' and presently I heard the sweet, low voice again.

"'Dear Lord! I thank you for David! And, Lord—take care of mother and father—and all the others! I cannot at this moment remember all their names, but You know they are all good men—especially Chips! Amen.'

"The sea did not reach us again. The uprush which threw us on to the top of the cliff, was caused, I think, by the inrush of the crashing waves over the sinking ship. That the sea did swallow every atom of the vessel and all it

contained is certain, for never a vestige of ship, crew, or cargo, was found on the Islands, or on the American coast.

"I learned afterwards that it is believed there is an under-current sweeping past the western Galapagos—that is where our ship foundered—which carries everything that comes within its influence away out into the north-west Pacific.

"Poor little Princess fell sound asleep, and I sat quite still hour after hour, until the eastern sky lighted up with a pale yellow streak; and then with the quick methods of the tropics, the whole east flamed into crimson glory, and that terrible night was past!

"I was most thankful to find that neither Princess nor I were cut or bruised by the awful experiences of the night. On looking over the edge of the cliff, I judged that we were eighty or a hundred feet above the sea. The storm had completely ceased, and the sea, like an exhausted monster, slowly lapped and rolled on the glistening rocks far below us, as if laughing at the cruel work it had done! Not a scrap of ship, sails, spars, or cargo, or, alas! mortal freight, was to be seen. And as I thought then, and proved afterwards, Princess and I were all that

remained of the stout old ship *Devonport*, her cargo, and company!

"Although both of us were sound of limb, yet we were stiff and benumbed when we stood up. It was fortunate that we had not attempted to stir in the darkness. We had been thrown upon a narrow ledge only a few feet wide, and on three sides of us the cliff went sheer down to the sea. On the fourth side—which was the land side, of course—there was a narrow rocky way.

"Holding Princess's hand, for I was afraid that she might become giddy looking down those terrifying cliffs, I led her slowly towards the land which stretched before us. Perhaps you may wonder why I felt anxious for the child's safety, when I have often told you how fearless she was, and could go aloft without a tremor, gaily laughing back to the sailors whom she could always beat in a race to the main-top. But that night's dreadful catastrophe had shaken Princess to the heart. And even I, stout youth as I was, trembled like an aged man with shattered nerves and feeble gait.

"We soon got clear of the rocky cliffs, and found ourselves confronted with forests—I can give them no other designation, they grew so

great and high—of prickly pear. It is very astonishing how thankful we are in some great crisis for things which in ordinary times we accept as mere matters of course. When the good God cast Princess and me on the cliff, if He had not saved our shoes from being torn off our feet, we would now have been in a miserable plight, and utterly unable to seek safety. I had had much experience of cactus in Peru, and learned that woe betides the most careful traveller who dares to approach those terrible needle-protected plants with unshod feet.

"By carefully exploring along the edge of the prickly pear forest, we reached the highest land thereabout. Here we found an old ruin of considerable size, which I judged by its shape and general appearance must have been a church. All woodwork had long since disappeared, but the stone Altar still stood in place. And clambering in through cracked walls and broken roof, hung great festoons of gorgeous white clematis.

"After resting in the old ruin, and thankfully receiving its lesson of peace and beauty, we cautiously made our way along a curious path, which did not seem to be a path for human feet, but rather for creatures of another kind alto-

gether. And before we proceeded far I solved the problem—or rather it was solved for me—by one of those strange antediluvian creatures after which the Spaniards named the Islands—*Galapagos*—the euphonious Spanish name of the tortoise.

"As Princess and I almost crept along (we had to stoop so low to avoid the cruel cactus) we met one of the ghastly monsters plodding his weary—tortoises always look weary—way along. It was of immense size, one of the sort, as I learned afterwards, weighing about the same as a medium-sized ox.

"The thing did not take the least notice of us, but came steadily along with a sad preoccupied expression on its funny old face, maybe thinking of friends he had lost about the time of the Flood. It is known for a fact that galapagos live to an extraordinary age on their islands; no one knows exactly how long, but it is certainly hundreds of years.

"As the monster evidently intended to keep possession of the path we of necessity had to make room for him. It being impossible for us to step aside into the dense mass of cactus needles (although it would have been an easy and safe thing for him to do with his coat of

mail that would have turned a rifle-bullet), the only course left open for us was hastily to retreat along the path back to the ruin, and wait until the strange beast passed.

"I had been so intently watching the galapago, that I did not notice that Princess was nearly collapsing with terror. But when the strange monster disappeared, and I had turned my whole attention to the child, I found to my consternation that she was speechless, and shaking with terror. I rubbed her hands to restore circulation, saying some reassuring words, and she slowly recovered, greatly to my relief. The first words she said in an awed whisper were, while she grasped my hands, and looked with horror in my face:

"'Was it Satan, David?' Then I realized what I ought to have seen sooner; namely, that the poor child had nearly died of sheer fright at the monstrous thing we had encountered.

"I had seen several of the galapagos on board of a schooner at Callao; therefore I was not so utterly shocked as Princess had been that morning at sight of the ungainly horror, which—to her—did not seem of this world at all. However, she slowly recovered her usual

sensible demeanour as I kept on telling her about these curious creatures, and explaining that they are quite harmless, and are only found of such immense size in the Galapagos Islands, where I presumed we now were.

"After a while Princess recovered sufficiently to start again on our quest for human beings. But before we left the silent old ruin she clasped her little hands together, and, looking up through the vines and broken arches of the roof, said quite distinctly—as Princess always did when she addressed God, just as if she were speaking to some one visibly present, which I verily believe was the truth in her case:

"'Dear Lord! I thank You that the terrible beast which David and I met in the path just now is only one of Your innocent, funny creatures, not Satan as I supposed and became so dreadfully terrified! Please forgive my foolishness, Dear Lord! Amen.'

CHAPTER VI

THE VISION

"After some careful exploration through the cactus forest—this is quite a correct name, for

it was literally a *forest*—we came upon a clear space of perhaps two or three acres. This I found was enclosed by a roughly built stone wall, and I remember thinking at the moment that the builder had not far to go for his material in that region of rocks. But although rocks predominated, yet what soil there was must have been good, for sweet potatoes, beans, Indian corn, and many other vegetables, besides oranges, and other fine fruit trees, grew and flourished luxuriantly.

"On a rising ground which afforded a good position to keep watch over the plantation, there stood a little cottage, 'rancho,' as the Spaniards call it. When we came near this abode of human beings—and very thankful we were, for by this time we were nearly perishing with hunger and fatigue—a dog discovered us, rushed out barking, and eyeing us suspiciously. This brought a woman, then a man, and then two children to the door, where they all stood apparently struck dumb with amazement at sight of us. And no wonder they were dumbfounded, for, as I learned afterwards, we were the only strangers the man and woman had seen in many years, and the very first that the children had ever seen! Therefore we were a wonderful, in fact,

a sort of uncanny, visitation to the good, honest, ignorant, creatures, as we proved them to be later on.

"The woman recovered herself first—women are always far ahead of men at the uptack—and sharply calling off the dog sent him yowling to the back premises with a neat kick. Then she called to us 'Entrar! Entrar!' and although we did not know the meaning of the *word*, we quickly knew the meaning of that *tone* which 'shall cover the multitude of sins' in the day of judgement.

"Then Princess and I were courteously shown into the very humble abode of Señora and Señor Manuel Martinez—as we learned to call them afterwards. I have often wondered after many experiences of that sort why it happens that the totally ignorant and the highly refined are the only ones who show hospitality with simplicity and kindness.

"Abraham was a 'Prince in the land' and had three hundred servants born in his own house! so he was a man of great substance and high importance. Three wayfaring men came to his tent door, and he simply constrained them to stay and accept his hospitality. Then Abraham—the Prince—ran and took a calf

from the herd and gave it to a young man to dress, at the same time telling Sarah to make ready cakes for the strangers. All this, mind you, while the men rested, and no doubt talked with Abraham as they found opportunity.

"Fancy a half-bred sort of man acting thus: the thing would be impossible! Such a one would have lost his head between wondering what was the correct thing to do, and making everybody uncomfortable in his awkward attempts to do it in what he thought a proper manner, whereas Abraham only thought of doing an act of kindness and hospitality.

"Now let us turn from 'Prince' Abraham, the king rescuer and learned savant, to Manuel, the utterly ignorant *ranchero*, to whom the page of a book was as blank as the face of a rock, and a good deal more so, for Manuel knew what to do with a rock, but he had no use for a book, and never wore out his heart or brain with such things, and so was well content. A man who neither craved nor cared for anything beyond his own little corner of the Galapagos Islands. A man who rarely saw a human face excepting his own little household, and when at long intervals the Padre (whom he had known and loved all his life) came plodding

along on his merciful rounds to pray for Manuel and family, and console them with spiritual consolation in time of grief, and to rejoice with them in times of rejoicing.

"But this poor, ignorant man did the honours of hospitality with the hearty, good grace of the great, rich Prince Abraham on the plain of Mamre, surrounded with honour, power, learning, and wealth, as we are told he was. Both men did their deeds of kindness with the grace of naturalness, a manner which civilization seems to have erased from modern men and women.

"So my poor man and wife—good souls—soon jaloused what had happened, and the woman quickly had Princess into an inner bit of a room, and, divesting her of her tattered garments, wrapped her in a nice, soft poncho, and laid the wearied child on what was evidently the woman's own children's bed. In the meantime Manuel had promptly busied himself in preparing food—exactly as Abraham the Prince had done—only instead of slaying a calf he decapitated a fat rooster, and dressed it in less time than I take to recount the interesting process. While thus busily engaged upon his hospitable task, he nevertheless found time to fish out from a great chest—the receptacle for

the family wardrobe, I inferred—some garments for me.

"In a very short time, even by the calculation of my impatient appetite, the '*potaje*'—that was what Manuel termed the savoury mess he had in hand—was ready, and he poured it into a large, coarse, earthenware dish, the aroma filling the house with the most delightful odour I ever inhaled in my life. The wife ladled some of the delicious soup into a handy little bowl for Princess. Then Manuel, presenting me with a fine large wooden spoon, invited me to fall to, which I did without further ceremony. And I think that dish of *potaje* was, 'without exception,' the most delicious food I ever tasted, and the little loaf of bread which the good fellow provided as an adjunct to the soup was truly wonderful in its heavenly flavour.

"I learned afterwards that *potaje* is simply a hotch-potch of the most splendid kind. It is a standard dish with the Spaniards of South America, from the highest to the lowest strata of society.

"After appeasing my hunger, and finding that Princess was happily in the land of dreams, I became so overcome with sleep that my good host, seeing my condition, led me into a snug

little store-room, where all manner of goods were kept, and where high up on one side there was a wide settle, well covered with straw. Here Manuel intimated, by expressive words and signs, was 'un buen sitio para la siesta,' and I quickly took the hint, and in a few moments fell into profound slumber, so profound that I did not awake until daydawn of the morrow.

* * * * *

"When I came at my friend Manuel's call to 'ven a comer,' I found Princess already up, and looking bright and even happy, poor child, in spite of her late dreadful experiences.

"'Good morning!' she cried, with the same free, cheerful manner with which she always greeted Chips and me of a morning.

"'Oh, I have had such beautiful dreams! but I do not know if they were only dreams—I think they must have been real *visions*, not merely dreams! Chips once told me that people in Scotland sometimes saw visions; only he did not call them visions, but another name which I have forgotten."

"'Perhaps it was wraiths,' I suggested.

"'Yes! that was the name. But I think Chips told me that wraiths never uttered a word. So

my dreams must have been visions, for oh, they spoke to me, and made me perfectly happy! I saw my mother and father, and I held their hands as plainly as I hold your hands at this moment. And dear old Chips was there, and I am sure all the crew must have been there also, for there were so many. But, of course, my attention was principally taken up with mother and father, and Chips, because I loved them most.'

"Thinking that the child had gone far enough in her startling record of dreams—or visions, as she persisted in calling what she had seen in the night—I persuaded her to do justice to the good breakfast which Manuel and the señora had prepared for us, and set out so nicely on their rough but clean table.

"After we had enjoyed the fine things provided for us—delicious bread, Indian corn, porridge and milk, besides many kinds of fruit, and all served as willingly and courteously as though Princess and I had been a king and queen, instead of a pair of utterly destitute castaways, I proposed that we should look at Manuel's plantation, and examine the curious plants and trees which he cultivated; the banana, with its long, graceful leaves and great bunches of fruit, the beautiful orange trees, the wonderful gourds,

as large as a cask, the delicious water-melons, which grew in every spare corner like weeds, the pretty, sweet-potato plant, which is not a potato at all but a convolvulus with a very beautiful flower and a root which is fit to grace a king's table.

"But none of these things tempted Princess that morning, for she had other plans in her head. She wished to go to the old ruin where we had rested awhile when we were cast ashore by the sea. Of course, I wished to do anything to divert the child's mind from brooding upon her terrible loss and forlorn condition; so I made no objection to her plan.

"After several linguistic flights and a few presentations of the signs of the Zodiac, I managed to explain to Manuel that my little señorita desired to go to the old ruin which we had discovered. The good fellow soon caught on to my meaning, and quietly and quickly providing some bread, bananas, and oranges for our midday repast, and seizing his stout staff, he declared himself ready for the expedition.

"I suppose some particular day in each of our lives remains vividly in every man's memory. I remember every detail of that day as though

it were yesterday. I even remember such trifles as our exact positions as we wended our way through the cactus forest: Manuel leader, Princess in the middle, and I rearguard. I remember the shape and colour of every flower we gathered and admired, the birds we saw—some so tame that they allowed us almost to touch them (it takes long knowledge of the cruel ways of man to make the wild creatures fear us!). Then there was the startling episode of again meeting the great monster which so terrified Princess at our first encounter. But Manuel made short work of the galapago. As he slid out his ridiculous head—as tortoises do to look at the world—Manuel tapped the creature sharply with his staff and ordered him out of our way. The galapago seemed to understand Spanish in a fashion I envied, for he immediately turned off the path and gave us room to pass. It was no question of honour or right of way, it was simply a case of necessity, for it was utterly impossible for us to give way and face the fearful cactus needles, whereas these awful spines made no more impression on the tortoise's splendid armour than the brushing of white clover would make upon our hands.

"This particular galapago had a curious

history, which my friend Manuel told me long afterwards, for I was his working guest for six months before I had the chance of a passing fishing schooner bound for Guayaquil. But that was an after-adventure which I may tell you of at some future time.

"To return to 'Don Alvarado' (as Manuel addressed the tortoise which had politely given us the right of way), Manuel declared that the creature knew a good many Spanish words. He had been in Manuel's possession ever since he —Manuel—was a boy; and, moreover, had belonged to the Martinez family for at least four generations, which made the 'Don' considerably over two hundred years old. Manuel had no idea what age the 'Don' was when he became a *protégé* of the family, but he inclined to the opinion that the 'Don' was fully grown even then. His weight had remained about the same for many years. Manuel had made a practice of weighing the creature every few years on an old-fashioned pair of scales which he had negotiated from a whaler, and he found that 'Don Alvarado' varied very little, year in and year out, from six hundred pounds. This is not an extra weight for galapagos, many turning the scale at eight hundred.

"I learned these interesting items—and much more—long after the day when we three met 'Don,' and of course after I picked up enough Spanish to be able to follow Manuel's talks coherently.

"Princess was in high spirits that morning, and as the 'Don' turned slowly and calmly aside, at Manuel's admonition, to make room for us to pass, she patted his back, laughed merrily, and said:

"'Thank you, Don Alvarado! And I humbly beg your pardon for mistaking you for another personage altogether, when I first met you!'

"So we three went on our way, and in a short while came to the ruin. And we being in so much better condition than before I now examined the place with more interest and care.

"Although even at its best it had only been a rough sort of building, yet by its form and general construction I was confirmed in my first opinion that it was the ruin of a church. All the woodwork had disappeared, but the stone altar still stood in place, and, climbing in through cracked walls and broken roof, hung great festoons of gorgeous white clematis and other splendid tropical vines.

"When we entered the strange, silent place, Manuel reverently doffed his sombrero, and of course I did the same with my tattered old cap. But although Manuel was so punctilious in his respect to the old building, I noticed that he had no hesitation about lighting, with flint and steel, one of his nice cigarrillos—the tobacco home grown, home cured, and rolled up in the sweet fragrant inner covering of the Indian corn cob, not in dirty paper as is the custom in civilized countries. Then calmly taking a seat on one of the convenient stones lying about, he quietly and philosophically proceeded to enjoy the present moment, as all wise men advise us to do.

"After awhile we ate our frugal but most delicious lunch, and when we had rested a bit, Princess and I went wandering and exploring about the old place, leaving Manuel meantime quietly to finish another cigarrillo.

"By its position we concluded that the raised part at the very end of the building must have been the altar. And as we stood there, never speaking a word, while Manuel sat quite still, at the other end of the building, my mind went away back to the priests and congregations of men and women who had worshipped there in

some far past, filling the place with life, sounds of spoken words, chants, and hymns! Now only we three in the silent ruin, with never a sound save the booming of the restless surge, with its messages of sorrow to Princess and me.

"In a little while I felt a strange awe creeping into my heart—not fear, only awe—for I knew that *others* were coming! Looking at Princess I saw that she knew also, for on her face there was an expression of radiant happiness and loveliness, such as I had never seen before, although she was always a beautiful child!

"Princess clasped her hands, and in a low happy voice broke the silence in kind loving words, the last I ever heard her speak except in my dreams!

"'My dear Lord, I thank Thee that *they* are coming for me, but, dear Lord Jesus, remember David, for he will be very lonely in this strange land. Amen!'

"Then while I stood and wondered, suddenly they were all there! Her mother and father, Chips, and every one of the crew—all were there barring *one*! But he was there indeed! Not contented and happy as were all the others, but lying cold and stark upon the ground—*Dead*! And again I heard repeated in my soul

that terrible verse which Chips once explained to Princess's satisfaction: 'And shall come forth, they that have done good, unto the resurrection of *Life*, and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of *Death*.'

"In a moment, with a glad cry, Princess sprang to her father and mother—her face radiant with the beauty and light which mortal faces never possess, and looking lovingly back to me, as she held her father's and mother's hands.

"If you ask me how they all appeared, I can only say that they seemed possessed of perfect contentment! A wonderful contentment such as I have never seen on mortal face of man or woman.

"I remember thinking at the moment how strange it was that Manuel sat calm and unmoved with all this wonderful company before him! But the fact was that the good fellow saw no one save Princess and me standing by the altar: and he told me afterwards that he did not see us change our positions until Princess sank to the ground in what he supposed to be a fainting fit brought on through fatigue. And when it was all past, I found myself still in my first position, namely, leaning against the altar,

with Princess lying on the ground, and Manuel kneeling beside her, weeping and saying prayers over her silent little body. Then the understanding of it all came fully into my mind! I realized that when I saw Princess pass over to her mother it was her spiritual self, lovely and radiant, which went, while her earthly body lay quiet and still.

"When I managed to ask Manuel what he had seen, he looked scared and troubled, and only shook his head. But what *I saw* I have told you; and it was just as real and palpable to me as any other event of my life. And what is more, it has remained a happy and consoling remembrance to me ever since.

"We reverently laid the child's body on the altar. Manuel went back to his rancho, and quickly returned with such things as we required. His wife and their two quiet children came also, and it was a most strange and touching sight when the father and mother, with the two children, knelt down before my little Princess, and quietly offered up their simple prayers for the child they had treated so mercifully even with their scanty means—and without a vestige of hope of reward, at least in this world! But I have often thought since, that Manuel and his

wife will in no wise lose their reward, for they gave much more than the 'cup of cold water,' good, kind souls!

"We prepared a grave immediately in front of the altar; and the children brought great armfuls of the splendid, white clematis, with which we entirely covered the dark earth, making her body's resting-place really worthy of our little lady. But whenever I look back upon that strange event, I do not see a *grave*; I see my beautiful, radiant Princess holding her mother's hands, and smiling back to me, with the glory of Paradise on her face!"

WHITESKIN, REDSKIN, AND DIABLO

WHITESKIN, REDSKIN, AND DIABLO

Let not him that girdeth on his harness boast himself as he that putteth it off.

PRELUDE

Injins! Stranger, yes! I know 'em well;
As mean as skunks, and wickeder nor hell!

I've knowed 'em since I was an eight-year-old,
There ain't no Injin tricks I need be told!

In cussedness, and every devil's crime,
They get the bulge on Satan every time.

And all the parsons Boston ever struck
Can't change the natur' o' one Injin Buck.

But, Stranger, when you say they *can't* act square,
I've got the bind, my friend, upon you there!

I ain't a scholard, so I can't tell why,
But this I do know, Stranger, that you lie!

Out on the Big Horn forty years ago,
I trapped for peltries with a Mountain Crow.

Our luck was bad, the season wouldn't freeze,
The snow was ten feet deep, and soft as cheese.

Our grub near petered out, and not one thing
On foot, in water, or upon the wing

Came by our camp! And then I got to know
There's more'n cussedness even in a Crow!

Our grub, perhaps, would go a dozen rounds,
And then—wal—then the Happy Huntin' Grounds!

When up got that queer Crow, an' gave a speech,
Stranger, your dandy colleges can't teach!

I ain't forgot it all them forty years,
I won't forget it—not until I hears

My checks call'd in—and then I hope to know
In them ar parts old Passacon the Crow!

Says he—an' stood there straighter nor a tree,
Just like a king (or what he ought to be)—

"Friend, one must die, and Passacon will show
His friend the heart that beats within a Crow.

"Brother, our food will serve but one, and I
Was taught by chiefs the way a chief should die!"

I tell ye, Stranger, it seem'd hardly square
To let a man die while the grub was there.

But if an Injin says he'll die—why, then
He'll die in spite o' twenty thousand men!

And die he did—but in my stupid way
I wish'd we both had been wiped out that day!

Yes, Injin's Injin, Stranger, but that Crow
Taught me some things my larnin' didn't know!

CHAPTER I

EL PASO DEL NORTE

ONCE upon a time I went on a fishing, hunting, and exploring expedition away up towards the headquarters of the Rio Grande. I happened to be located at the city of El Paso del Norte when I made up this rather indefinite plan, and it was somewhat difficult to arrange a proper outfit for a long tour, with the materials to be picked up in a frontier 'Dago' town. One of my first difficulties was to find a suitable man to act as guide, hunter, general factotum, and cheerful companion. I consulted a tourist agent on the subject, who at once recommended a man who had left his name with the agent, in case any one should wish his services. As this man was boarding at a little Mexican Fonda near hand, the agent soon had him along, and left us to talk matters over, and if we concluded an agreement, to pay our fees and receive his blessing.

I found Aaron Slocum—that was the man's

name—pretty well up in years, but yet like so many of those who have passed their lives almost wholly in the open air (witness Abraham, Moses, etc., all going far into the second hundred, well and hearty) that I thought Aaron, wiry and fresh looking, was fit for an extra twenty or thirty years over and above the span allotted to men by the Psalmist.

As a good deal of the success and pleasure of my adventure resulted from my lucky acquaintanceship with Aaron Slocum, I had better explain fully how we finally came to an understanding, or perhaps I ought to say how Aaron came to an understanding, for he was so careful thoroughly to examine my general character that I had some difficulty in satisfying him that I was quite a suitable companion for an ancient and respectable inhabitant to go into the wilderness with.

One finds all sorts and conditions of men—and women, I may add—at El Paso del Norte, the border town of Mexico, situated on the south bank of the Rio Grande; therefore it behoved both Aaron and me to be careful how we metaphorically picked each other up. I wrote "an ancient inhabitant" just now, but I must explain that Aaron Slocum was not a denizen of

that ill-flavoured city. On the contrary, he was tenaciously proud of hailing from the classical Cape Cod, the Puritan faith of which region he strenuously professed, but somewhat curiously intermingled with Indian beliefs and ethics.

Strange to say, that although born so near the salt water, Aaron's long life—he was seventy when I foregathered with him—had been passed far from the world of waters, excepting the world of freshwater lakes, all of which he knew intimately, but which I hardly knew even by name.

Aaron had drifted south with a party who had engaged him at the Yellow Stone, in the capacity of hunter, guide, negotiator with Indians, besides general handy man in the numberless emergencies unexpectedly arising in the wilderness, wherein the ordinary civilized man is utterly helpless. I learned by degrees (for he was not much addicted to speech) that Aaron had endured much tribulation of spirit during his four months' sojourn with his late party, all the members of which were members of scientific societies, presidents of colleges, and clever men of every kind, and, as Aaron expressed it, "all of them with half the letters of the alphabet tagged on to their names, and yet

not having enough common sense with it all to come in out of the rain."

Aaron had spent such a hard time with his learned company—but he did not call them *learned*, he called them simply "a bunch of silly tender-feet"—that he would not agree with me for a long journey until we had had a short trip together somewhere. The poor old chap had suffered "sich dogont agonies" from the endless scrapes which the foolhardiness of the professors led him into that he vowed never again to start with white men until he had proved them, and found out their exasperating ways.

"Injins," Aaron would remark, "are all one shape when on the trail. They never blunder along like whites do, two abreast on a narrow trail, neither of the fools getting the best of it! A redskin picks the best of the road, and leaves the best clear for the next fellow. Sich ways are common sense, and why the high larnin' should knock it all out of a white man I dun know! And I don't intend to travel no more with white men until I see if they know better than to ketch a rattler by the tail because some other fool had told him that the wicked critter couldn't bite if he held it tight enough! And that was in them everlasting *Bad-lands*, where it is about as hard

to dig a grave as it is in a bed o' New England granite!"

* * * * *

When Aaron Slocum told me that little episode, and so delicately hinted at the sad finale, I realized how necessary it was, from his former experiences, to know something of his employer's idiosyncrasies before embarking with him on an indefinite voyage into the lonely wilderness.

We took what I may call, in sporting phrase, our "preliminary canter" into Mexico, and a very successful canter it was. I learned a good deal of the northern part of that romantic land where the brave, but, alas! cruel old *conquistadors* fought, and suffered, and died like gallant reckless adventurers as they were.

Upon our return to Paso del Norte, Aaron expressed himself in a few words—Aaron never wasted anything, least of all words—as quite willing "to hitch on to the wagon from this measly old Dago town right away up to the Yukon." I took this wide geographical definition as signifying thorough approval of my general conduct, and as I had fully proved his fitness as guide, hunter, and head major-domo, I engaged him for an indefinite period at eighty dollars a month, and never once had

occasion to regret my choice. What Aaron didn't know of all manner of wilderness life was not worth knowing. Then with regard to general matters—cooking, mending torn things, fixing saddles, and all the innumerable odd jobs constantly cropping up when people live in what may be designated a state of nature, and haven't got shops to run to every minute—Aaron was a past master. And best of all, when one got to know him intimately, he was the best-tempered man it ever was my happy fate to be associated with, which, by the way, is a quality of supreme importance in all modes of life, but in the wilderness is the elixir of life which cures everything, like good old Perry Davies' Pain-killer.

When we finally left Paso del Norte our caravan consisted of, besides Aaron and myself, two broncos (western name for prairie-bred horses) for riding purposes, and two mules for carrying our camping outfit. We had selected both horses and mules with the greatest care, not only in regard to soundness of body and limb, but also to temper, for we both knew by sad experience in the past that one evil beast will not only cause more trouble in a camp than all the others put together, but will often by his roguish disposition so demoralize his com-

panions that the whole camp becomes a perfect pandemonium. Horses and mules, and all other creatures which I know intimately, can curse and swear just as wickedly as men, although not quite so disgustingly.

After a few days of careful trial we took over the two broncos and one mule. But the second mule, although a splendid animal to look at, and sound as a bell, caused us so much uneasiness with regard to his mind and disposition, that we told his owner we could not take the beast for fear of his tricks giving us trouble and probably demoralizing the whole camp. But the poor Dago was so very anxious to get away to Mexico City by train, where his family were located, that he offered the mule at half his first-named price. This concession would not have moved me at all, but Aaron was so taken by the animal's bodily beauty and fitness that he persuaded himself, and finally me, that by patience and good management he could cure "Diablo's" kink of temper, which he felt sure was an acquired sinfulness and not a natural disposition, the mule was too beautiful to be naturally wicked, etc.

One great point in Diablo's favour was the fact that he could carry nearly double the load

of an ordinary mule, without turning a hair. His one vice, what I may call his devilish prize trick, was to rear without a moment's warning and throw himself flat on his back. Of course this was a most dangerous proceeding if he were carrying a rider, but if he only had a pack on his back it did not matter so much unless unfortunately his load happened to be breakables, in which case of course the catastrophe was according to the value of the articles of which the load consisted.

But Aaron pointed out that we could load Diablo with flour, beans, sugar, and horse food, all such things as would take no harm from the mule's humorous tricks, and, moreover, he affirmed that by careful management he would cure Diablo in course of time. Aaron never adopted violent measures of punishing animals as most men are so prone to do. He pursued a mild sort of educational training, which he said appealed to a beast's understanding just as such a course appeals to a man's common sense, if he has any.

So we adopted Diablo, paid the poor ragamuffin Dago full price—it was not much after all—and began in earnest to complete our arrangements for an early start. Both Aaron

and I were tired of El Paso del Norte, and its conglomeration of humans and inhumans collected from all points of the compass.

For ten days or more we kept our broncos and mules entirely by themselves in a corral that we hired for the purpose, so that they might become intimately acquainted and friendly with each other.

With Aaron's judicious assistance I selected such articles as were required for a first-class camp outfit, and at the same time everything of as small bulk and weight as was compatible with utility. We did not take a very large supply of food, as we depended upon replenishing our stock as we went along.

Our route as I had planned it out in my mind's eye, was a general north-westerly course, which I reckoned would bring us somewhere into the vicinity of Great Salt Lake in two or three months if we did not "git busted" as Aaron Slocum ominously expressed it, in the meantime.

Early in my acquaintanceship with Aaron I discovered that he had that curious strain of melancholy which I think must be an inheritance of New Englanders from the time of that dismal landing "on the wild New England

shore." If I only looked at his immovable countenance when he was speaking, I could never tell whether he were saying some really funny thing, or if he was expressing some profoundly sad opinion. So I did not know exactly in which category to place the following lively prognostication, that he calmly delivered one night as we were making our plans.

"If we don't git busted among the *Zunies*, and if we git safely through that ugly bit of rattler infested sage brush country on the other side of the San Juan, and if our broncos and mules aren't stolen or drowned, or hocus-pocus'd by them cussed rattlers, we oughter to strike Salt Lake in two months. And as that will be early April, we'll have God's beautiful northern summer before us, and if that don't make poor sinful men happy, then I think they oughter to have their portion with the unbelievers."

Aaron had also a peculiar habit of mixing words and even phrases from Holy Writ in his ordinary conversation, so simply and naturally that he seemed to do it quite unconsciously, but often with startling effect upon the hearer. As I kept a semi-correct journal of that voyage through the wilderness, I often transcribed his exact words, but I could not transcribe his de-

lightful tone of voice and pronunciation. And although you may think that I have exaggerated Aaron's expressions now and then, I have by no means done so, and many of his choicest quotations—I say it with all reverence—have so far escaped my memory that they only come flashing into my mind at untoward moments when I cannot take time to fix them in durable form.

CHAPTER II

AARON SLOCUM AND DIABLO

At daydawn on the 31st of January 189–, Aaron and I bade farewell to El Paso del Norte, and turned our faces towards the North Star. Our animals were all in good form, and even Diablo seemed to have greatly improved under the good example of our sedate broncos and Aaron's firm but kind treatment. Before starting, Aaron packed his bronco with Diablo's load and rode the latter himself. I expostulated with him for running this risk, saying that it would be better after the mule became travel-weary to begin his education. But Aaron de-

clared that it was always the better plan to show both man and beast at the very beginning of an acquaintanceship, that nonsense was not to be tolerated, especially wicked nonsense.

On the first day Diablo played his back somersault trick exactly six times: I counted them carefully, as I fully expected each murderous attempt would involve funeral expenses and necessitate the engagement of a new major-domo.

The proceedings of the little beast were extremely curious. He would go along by the hour as if he never heard of such things as "battle and murder and sudden death," calmly nibbling a succulent weed now and then and looking upon the whole cavalcade with a calm sweet expression of good wishes. Then, with the swiftness of an arrow from the bow, before one could realize how it all happened, although one had been carefully observing the creature all the time, Diablo had performed his wonderful acrobatic feat, and was lying flat on his back playfully pawing the air with his neat round hoofs, and showing the whites of his gleaming eyes.

How Diablo had acquired this evil habit I

do not know, but I do know how he was cured and acquired the habit of goodness instead thereof.

By some intuitive, instant perception, Aaron could always anticipate Diablo's performance a moment or two, and by the time the mule looked round to enjoy the sight of a scattered load, or better still, a scattered man, Aaron was gently pulling upon the bridle to assist him to rise, at the same time using the gentlest kind of expressions, as if he were soothing a beloved child who had come to grief by some mishap, but by no fault of its own.

For the first week or ten days of our journey, Diablo went through this performance not less than four times a day, and some days as often as eight or ten times. Whenever he recovered his equilibrium after each desperate attempt to demolish his rider, and finding Aaron utterly unmoved in temper, and unscathed in body, and gently rubbing his (Diablo's) legs with tender solicitude, it was an object lesson in psychology to watch Diablo's bewildered expression at the utter uneffectualness of his trump-card trick, a trick which had never before failed to rouse the whole camp to a state of hopping-madness since (in an inspired

moment) he had invented the clever gymnastic performance.

It was a marvel to me then, and it is a marvel to me still, when I reflect upon it, how Aaron escaped with his life from Diablo's fiendish trick. He was no longer a young, agile man, and even the cleverest acrobat might have been caught by Diablo's lightning somersault feats. But Aaron Slocum never got a scratch, and what is more wonderful still, he completely cured Diablo of his demoniac performance.

The way Aaron explained the matter to me was shortly in this wise:

"The poor, mean critter must have been only half broke when them Dagos put a full load on his back, and if ever you have carried an extra heavy swag yourself, you know how easy and comforting it is—when you come to a nice soft sloping bit of ground—to throw yourself flat on your back! And if you take notice you will see that Diablo never makes a mistake in choosing a proper place for his little game.

"Then them Dagos try to cure their beast-critters, as well as their human-critters, by savage means, and no doubt they punished Diablo in such cruel fashion that what was

only a nick-name at first became his everlasting proper name.

"But you see," continued Aaron, "a little Christian treatment and common sense have almost cured the critter, and made him fit company for human folk. And it is all the result of that advice in the Wise Book: 'And as ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.'" It was truly wonderful how Aaron's judicious treatment transformed a treacherous little semi-fiend into a sweet tempered creature, as nearly sinless as it is possible for a mule to be in this evil world, and the truth of this assertion you will learn later on, if you have patience.

Ours was rather a small company to undertake such an extended travel as I contemplated. But when I hinted this to Aaron, he did not at all favour any addition to our number, although I pointed out to him that another hand would help to lighten his multifarious duties. But he declared that the more you increased a party, the more danger there was of ruckshuns, and clinched his opinion with the old saw, slightly varied, "two's company, three ain't none." So with some little misgiving I gave up the idea of an extra hand or two, and started into the

wilderness with my one trusty servitor, trusty down to the ground, as I proved him in many a tight place!

At odd times by the camp fire, or at noonday rests, Aaron recounted, much to my edification, a great part of his life's history, and a very interesting, not to say instructive, history it was. But the point I wish to emphasize at the moment is the fact that he believed implicitly that a man is safer and more comfortable alone, or with only one companion, in the wilderness, than with a large party. Therefore when I suggested an addition of one or two more to our number he strenuously opposed the idea; giving many instances of facts which had come under his own observation, in support of his objection.

Aaron asserted that any number of men over *two* invariably fell into different opinions about this, that, and the other. And so by swift degrees they came to disagreeable disputes, if not worse, until the camp finally became a sort of angry debating society. Whereas, with only *one* in a camp, quarrelling was absolutely an impossibility, for no man ever quarrels with himself unless he goes mad, and then he kills himself. But *two* in a camp was Aaron's ideal

number, for in that case they had so to depend on each other every moment of their lives, that instead of "familiarity engendering contempt," as the old proverb has it, the constant mutual dependence and association engendered affection and trust.

In support of his assertion Aaron told me the following touching little incident, which he declared was absolutely true in every particular, and when Aaron declared something to be "bed-rock true" you might take your oath upon the matter with assurance. Aaron was one of the sort who would have gone to the stake—when the stake was the fashionable way of convincing stubborn people—rather than whittle down that which he knew was a truth. Now I will proceed with Aaron's reminiscence; and if you enjoy it as much as I enjoyed it that moonlight night on the slopes of the Pina Mountains, you will have a pleasant hour's reading and reflection. I am sorry that I cannot recount Aaron's reminiscence in his own delightfully quaint phraseology, but I will give the meaning word for word.

CHAPTER III

THE PASSING OF AARON SLOCUM'S WHITE-SOULED FRIEND

Said Aaron, "It is a bit over forty years agone since I went trapping away out west with one of the whitest-souled men I ever struck, and he was an Injin. We had hunted and trapped for two or three seasons together on the Black Hills country, and had got on so well, and suited each other so comfortably, that we agreed to freeze on to each other for a long spell away out in the far West.

"I was born on Cape Cod, and I am a New Englander all over. My forefathers landed on Plymouth Rock, and what with the northern winters, and little grub, and the scalping Injins, they had a pretty hard time of it, and most of them died sooner or later—mostly sooner—but some managed to leave descendants, and I am one of them. You can imagine that men and women who came from such a stock were a tough sort both in soul and body for good or evil. That is why poor Diablo could never git the

bulge on me when he tried his back-hand-clip that you thought was sure to ketch me some day.

"I have been with the Injins off and on all my life. And I have learned to think a good deal more'n most men. And I have come to the conclusion that it is a mistake to treat a redskin on the same lines as a white man treats another white man as a rule. A redskin always kind of feels that a paleface is born with a lot of things in his head that the Injin can't learn nohow. And upon the whole I think that is true enough, and right enough too, in a way. But the trouble comes in when the redskin and paleface come to close quarters in making deals in large or small matters. The redskin is just as eager as the whiteskin to git the sugar, but the white claws it every time! And then there are ruckshuns, and killing, and scalping, and the cry goes round the country that there is no good Injin 'cept a dead Injin.

"There ain't no wickedness that Satan ever invented that an Injin can't better every time. But then on the other hand the virtue of a paleface is like skim milk to firewater, when an Injin takes to downright bed-rock righteousness! If a redskin chief pledges his word, he will

keep his promise though you cut him in pieces with red-hot knives.

* * * * *

"Passacon and I started away out west, intending to trap all winter on the Big Horn, and the next summer make our way out by the Missouri, or any of the open rivers.

"That was the meanest kind of winter I ever struck. Instead of freezing properly, it hardly froze worth a cent, but it was a great snow winter. It snowed and snowed until the tallest trees were nearly all buried to their tops, but the disjasket trouble was that week after week, and month after month, the snow kept so soft that the only fashion we could get about was to make sort of sleighs of pine tops, and lying flat on this arrangement push ourselves along by our hands and feet. But it was impossible to go far in this way, and indeed it was no use to go, for all the country, as far as we could see or judge, was just the same soft sludge, and never a mortal living creature to be seen.

"It is very curious—or very instructive, as the lecture fellows say—to notice the different way of whiteskin and redskin, and as I had little else to do that long, miserable winter, I noticed it a good deal.

"When Passacon and I got out of our blankets of a morning, as late as we possibly could stand it—so as to shorten the day, which was too long at the shortest—we would stir up our fire that we managed to keep alive with logs we found by tunnelling under the snow. After getting the fire agoing we would boil a pint apiece of snow water, with a pinch of coffee, and a few leaves of hemlock, and into this precious liquor we put six beans, but as the soft snow kept on we reduced our rations to four beans for the pair of us. After dividing this stuff into equal portions we drank it as blazing hot as we could manage, for the hotter it was the more life and comfort it put into us. During all the making and eating, or rather drinking, of our breakfast, Passacon would never speak a word! At first I thought his silence was owing to ill temper, or to the knowledge that death was on our trail to find us. But when I pressed him for the reason of his silence he told me, in a few short words, that in times of famine silence is a preserver of life, and needless talk is wasteful of strength! And I have proved the truth of this in many tight places since then.

"But of course, as the slow days went on,

and our bag of beans grew smaller and smaller, we both knew that our scanty fare would peter out long before the snow melted off, and it was too late in the season to expect a freeze.

"Although Injins ain't given to much talking at any time, and at a starvation time still less than usual, for the reason Passacon had stated, yet that redskin did talk considerable in those miserable days. And I know now that he did it to rouse me up when he saw that I was getting real, low-down miserable. He was a true friend, as I will show you presently—such a one as a man is mighty lucky if he strikes in a lifetime. And besides this, Passacon had been rather friendly to all whites ever since a white man had saved his life in a very brave way. He told me the story one day after I had piled some fine logs on the fire, and Passacon was comfortably fixed in his blankets with his feet toasting nicely at the fine blaze—if an Injin's feet are real hot, his whole body is warm, although he may be half naked. That 's why redskins always lie with their feet to the fire, and so keep the whole of the body warm, like wise men, while whiteskins lie with their shoulders scorching, and the rest of the body deadly cold, like foolish men!

"It was many snows agone, Passacon said, when he went with other young men from their lodges to work at a logging camp with the white men. They had cut and hauled a big pile of logs ready for the first spring float, when the melting snow would carry the logs in a great chute down to the mill on the lake.

"When the first of the flood comes down, the loggers must see to it that the logs in front are carried away clear, so as not to jam the greater mass which they start later. Injins are usually engaged for this work, as they are cleverer and braver than whites at the dangerous job.

"Passacon was at this work when the first float of the season began, and by some mishap he was swept away, and supposed to be lost, as no sane man would venture to help him in that awful rush of roaring water, ice, and jumping logs! But there was a fearless, if not a worldly, sane man coming up the trail that morning on his old bronco, and when he heard the cry that a man was lost in the chute he slued his beast round, and like a streak of greased lightning raced the rushing flood for five miles down to the lake, and he won! In less than no time he whipped off every stitch and leaped into the icy water, that was cold enough to freeze a fur seal.

But the parson—for it was just a parson, after all—didn't stop to think this way and that way, as men so often do, and lose their chance—if he had been one of that sort I would never have heard the brave story. Before Passacon went down for the last time in the deathly cold water, the parson had that redskin on his back and towed him ashore, where the mill people, first with a good rub of snow, and then with hot things inside and out, soon brought the paleface and redskin round to life again. And, strange to say, Passacon had never cracked a bone, or even gotten a scratch in all that fearsome rush and tumble; he was only kind of knocked silly for an hour or two. But it was a close call, the closest call, barring one, he ever had, and now I will tell you of that.

* * * * *

"Passacon and I had been snowed under for sixty-five days, as our notched stick recorded truer than ink and paper could have done. We had been caught in the snow-drift early in December, and now we were nearly half-way through February. We had not reckoned on the soft snow lasting more'n a month at the most, and here it was going on for three months, and not yet fit to bear a chipmunk with safety.

"Fortunately we had struck a splendid camp before ever the snow came on. It was a large, open, dry cave, with a cliff overhanging, which kept the snow from falling near our 'front door,' as we called it, and provided a fine space clear of snow. All about this open space, and by tunnelling into the snow a bit, we found plenty of firewood, for there 's plenty of pine and such stuff in the upper reaches of the Big Horn and Powder River. But if we had not struck such a fine camping ground as we did, and had we been caught in an open shelterless position, we wouldn't have lived a week.

"In our hunting and trapping in the summer months we had managed to do pretty well, selling our peltries to the trading posts, getting supplies in return, and sometimes a few dollars. In fact, I may say that we had done first rate until the ill luck of the soft snow overtook us, and made us prisoners.

"Then it was, when things had gotten to this low-down pass, that Passacon came out a square-footed Injin saint. And I always feel kind of mean when I think of how that redskin saved my life at the cost of his own! It came about in this way.

"One night after we had taken our meal of

hot water—we only had hot water at night—and were wrapped up in our blankets, Passacon said very quietly:

"'Aaron! don't waken me in the morning, I will take a long sleep. Only cook your own breakfast, and be very careful of everything.'

"That was all he said, and then went into a solid sleep for two nights and one day.

"I did exactly as he told me to do, and never said a word good or bad—for it is not wise to talk to an Injin when he wishes to be let alone. On the second morning he woke up looking chippy and bright, and I began boiling our tin pots, but before I put the pinch of coffee and our portion of beans into the hot water, Passacon laid his hand on my arm, and said quite gently, and with that pleased kind of look that Injins put on instead of a smile, like white folk:

"'Aaron, you must not make any food for Passacon! He is going to his fathers, and leaving his portion for you, to keep you alive in the dark days yet to come. And by and by, in the future years when you hear evil men telling lies of the poor foolish red men, then recount this story of how your friend—a Crow chief—passed to the Spirit Land to enable his friend—a paleface—to go back to his own people and tell the

story over and over until their cheeks grow red with shame for the evil deeds they have done to our race.'

"The chief never ate another morsel of food, although I regularly laid my portion before him and urged him to eat, saying that I, too, wished to die, and not be left alone in that dreadful loneliness. But he only laid his hand on mine, and said:

"'Boy!'—Passacon was twice as old as I—'Boy, it is not what we want, but what the *Great Manitou* gives, that is good for us. This life is still your portion for many moons and many snows. He is taking me to the Happy Hunting Grounds of our race, because I have suffered enough, and because I have fulfilled the purpose for which I was born.' Then, after a little rest, he said:

"'Now go, my son, collect much firewood to keep a great fire, for Passacon must leave you to-night, and a chief should have plenty of light on the road to the Land of Souls. When I tell you, then you shall make the fire great and high, and come close beside me, for there is a very lonely and desolate place which the Spirit must pass quite alone until it meets the waiting ones on the other side, and then all is well!'

"At midnight my friend made a signal to light his fire, and as it blazed straight up toward the narrow bit of star-lit sky that could be seen between the great walls of the canyon, Passacon signed me to come to him. The old Injin was so contented and happy-looking, that — not knowing Injin nature so well then as I do now —I thought the man was getting over his determination to die, and, much relieved in my feelings, I set about preparing some of our precious food. But Passacon beckoned me to him with such a quiet contented look, that I sat down and took his hands in mine just in the way we take a child's hands that we wish to comfort.

"Passacon must have felt my tears falling on his hands, for he said:

"'Don't weep, Aaron! Tears belong to squaws, men must bear pain and sorrow in silence. I know it is hard for you to behave like a redskin, because the Great Spirit made the paleface men and their squaws just alike, equal in wickedness and equal in foolishness: equal in wickedness, for they took all our hunting-grounds with lying pieces of paper painted with words meaning two things. And equal in foolishness, for when the palefaces and

their squaws got all the red men's bountiful hunting-grounds, they destroyed the countless herds of buffalo with all haste, and left their carcases to rot uselessly on the prairie, an offence to men and an insult to the *Manitou* who gave the buffalo for the support of men, not to be destroyed in foolish wantonness.'

"After a little pause and a drink of water, Passacon went on speaking.

"'Now I am ready to go to the Land of the Hereafter. You do not see any one, but I see many of those I lost long, long ago! I hear their whispered words, but I do not know their meaning, for it is a law of that land that men on this side do not understand the language thereof until they enter its portals. But we know the faces of those we lost long ago. And I see many who went from me in the far past! And they, too, know that I am coming to them, for they beckon and wave me to come quickly, but this is a trail whereon no man can hasten or delay.

"'Farewell, Aaron, my friend! I cannot see or hear you any more now, but I shall be the first to meet you when you come. Farewell! Be a brave, true man; and remember to tell your race that a redskin died to save your life!'

"These were Passacon's last words. All that night I sat beside my dead friend, and prayed the good God to let me also depart. The horror of utter loneliness was too heavy to bear. And although you may think it strange, Passacon was the only true friend I had in the world, and now that he was gone, why should I be left? But I was left, and here I am still after forty years!

"But in memory I have been true to my friend, and told my people the truth pretty often, and I may say that I never got much thanks. For when men do wrong they naturally don't like to hear of it. But I had to tell the truth as my friend told it to me, in spite of their cussing and bad names.

"I told the story to my party of professors, because they asked me to, but when I had finished they were all hopping-mad, and asked me if I thought that a lot of scalping red savages were fit company for a nation of white Christians. And I said that it greatly depended upon the white Christians! After that they didn't talk to me any more about redskins and white Christians. But when we got to Paso del Norte, and were settling up accounts in a pretty bad smellin' *Fonda*, I asked them what they thought of

white Christians now? and they only looked kind of hurt in their feelin's, and never said nothing at all!"

CHAPTER IV

ON THE TRAIL AND DISCOVERY OF FULL-MOON CITY

Aaron and I soon fell into each other's ways, and went along day after day in the most amicable manner. Indeed the spirit of peace so pervaded our camp than even Diablo soon began to imbibe the new order of things, and under the changed treatment he received became such a new creature that I had serious thoughts of changing his name. But Aaron was opposed to this. Firstly, because the mule knew and answered to his name in the most ready and cheerful manner, and, secondly, because his linguistic qualifications being limited, he would take a very long time to learn and answer readily to a new cognomen. Then, also, Diablo, not being cognisant of the derivation of his patronymic, we could not for a moment suppose that his rather suggestive name could possibly give the happy, sleek little mule a moment's pain. So

after due consideration we decided to continue his euphonious, though a bit disagreeably reminiscent, appellation.

When we left Paso del Norte we steered our course through part of New Mexico, making easy stages each day, there being no necessity to hurry, as the season was yet early.

We saw a little of the Zunie Indians—those dwellers in almost inaccessible cliffs and natural fortresses. But we did not hold much intercourse with these interesting people, for the reason that although Aaron Slocum had a vast knowledge of Indian dialects he was nonplussed by the Zunies' running fire of sibilants. Even I with my meagre stock of Spanish could understand them better than Aaron could, owing to those people having adopted many Spanish words during their long servitude under Spanish soldiers and priests.

We did not spend much time in New Mexico, as we had planned to keep pace with the advancing summer northward. So we made a short cut of it across the south-west corner of that State, and skirting the Pina Mountains, held a general northerly course through Arizona.

Our broncos and mules were in excellent

condition for travelling after their good keep and proper adjustment of their packs and saddles before starting. So we reckoned that, barring accidents, we should reach Salt Lake within two months, or thereabout, and then we would still have the finest of the year before us, with the glory of the Indian summer at the end. I may remark *en passant* that we did accomplish that journey within the specified time, a thing that is rarely done, even under the most favourable circumstances, in this world of untoward events.

For instance, we were nearly delayed indefinitely in a collection of log huts—they called it a town—in Arizona.

As a rule Aaron and I kept clear of any signs of our own race; but at the time I refer to we were running short of provender both for man and beast. Therefore, when Aaron suggested that we should try if "Full-Moon City" (that was the euphonious name of the delectable place) could supply our needs, I saw no reason to object, although, as I have already remarked, Aaron and I were of one mind in avoiding what is ycleped civilization in the far west. So-called "savage life" we both understood pretty well, and could generally get along therewith, but

we were very chary about foregathering much with our own colour.

However, having decided to test the capabilities and civilization of Full-Moon City, we marched into what we supposed to be the main street, and we soon found that the supposition was correct, for it was the only passage through the huts to the centre of the "City," a place called the Square. This consisted of a large corral, subdivided into various divisions for the accommodation of horses, cows, pigs, etc. Around the Square stood the largest buildings in the "City," bearing various attractive signs, such as "The First Call," "The Last Chance," "Forty Rod Whisky Saloon," "The Straight Game of Poker," "The Ladies' Dancing Academy and Music Hall," etc.

There was a wonderful sense of repose pervading the place, as if the inhabitants had gone to their work in the fields, or mines, outside the city, or else that they slept in the daytime, and did their work and business mostly in the cool night season. Everything being in this state of quietude, I told Aaron to go in search of such things as we were in need of, and I would look after the horses and mules. I took a seat on some lumber that was piled by the

side of the corral, holding the animals by their lariats. They did not take much holding, poor things, for they were both tired and hungry, therefore quite content to have a rest; no doubt, with the clever knowledge of the desert-bred creature, shrewdly guessing that there was a prospect of a good feed, as well as a long happy rest. I particularly noticed that day, as I had many times before, what a changed creature Diablo had become under Aaron's wise management. While I sat there talking cheerfully to the horses and mules, and telling them that Aaron would soon find them a feed, Diablo quietly laid himself down in the soft dust like a properly civilized mule, without disturbing his pack one iota, whereas six weeks before he would have flung himself savagely on his back, smashing to atoms whatever was breakable in his load, or, if a man were on his back, doing his level best to annihilate him. It was truly wonderful to study the metamorphosis that had been wrought in the little creature, and I have more to tell you of Diablo's changed mind later on in my story.

Aaron returned, having completed the purchase of the desired articles, and we at once moved over to the store where the things were,

and gave our expectant quadrupeds "a glorious blow out, fit to make the critters happy for a week," as Aaron emphatically declared.

While our broncos and mules were quietly and amicably discussing their breakfast from one large box (Aaron had taught them by some wonderful lessons of mutual forbearance not to snap at each other, and so waste half their food) we made a sumptuous repast from a large loaf of bread, two immense tin cups of hot coffee, and a couple of tins of the ubiquitous, yet ever welcome, sardine.

While we and our animals were thus pleasantly employed, there was a bustle at the "Last Chance Hotel," and from the door of that gay hostelry ten or a dozen men issued, not noisily hilarious, as is usually the case when men emerge from such abodes, but quietly and steadily, like men having serious business on hand. Our store-keeper (who had become quite friendly with Aaron since he had made a considerable number of purchases that morning, and incidentally with me since he perceived that Aaron and I were mates) explained the cause of the silent gathering at the "Last Chance Hotel."

It appeared that on the previous day there had been a large gathering at the "Hotel" of

men from the surrounding country, to celebrate some one of America's wonderful days. Of course everybody was armed, and in the midst of the hilarity two men—who had not met for more than a year—renewed some old-time quarrel, and after high words there was a shooting "scrape"—as the store-keeper designated the trouble—and one of the disputants was shot to death upon the spot.

"They were both dashed high school men," said our friend, "and quarrelled upon some point of larnin', and men never forget them sort of disruptions. But they won't shoot any more after to-day, you bet!"

Our store-keeper explained that there had been a proper jury trial, of which the bar-keeper, who was also landlord, was chosen foreman because he was the only quite sober man present. A bar-keeper in those parts must be a teetotaler, or he soon gets fired (as they call dismissal in that land of appropriate words).

The evidence was so clear against the shooter that he hadn't a word to say for himself, even if he had been sober enough to say it, which he wasn't, poor chap!

"So he was condemned to death," said our store-keeper. "And the Boys are going to fix

him now, and then put the two men in the same grave as it will save labour, and," he added with a touch of grim humour, "there won't be any fear of the men quarrelling any more, even though they are within reach of each other."

Aaron and I were just finishing our repast when the store-keeper was called outside. He came back in a few minutes with rather a shamefaced expression on his usually stern, immovable old face. He first looked closely at me, then at Aaron, and said in an apologetic sort of voice, quite different from his former dashing, free-and-easy tone:

"Gentlemen, the Boys have sent over to ask if either of you have a Bible, as they wish to read a chapter, just to make everything quite correct, and proper like."

I thought this a good chance to put in a word for the poor drunken fool who had done the shooting. So I said "Wouldn't it be better to hand this man over to justice, and let the law take its course?" But the store-keeper had his answer swift and pat.

"Lor' bless you, friend! there ain't any law or justice hereabouts! The nearest 'Justice,' as you call him, lives at the Forks, and that's two

hundred miles if it 's a rod. And the last shooter we sent over he let him go scot free because we called him ' Dead-Drop-Dan ' down here, and it turned out that his real name was ' Daniel Dropper '—that's law, siree! But we don't have no use for that kind of justice in Full-Moon City! Not much, you bet!"

" But have either of you gentlemen a Bible, please? for there isn't one in this town since a mean Pike[1] stole our'n from the ' Last Chance ' office, where it was kept to settle religious disputes, or for unfortunate cases like the present."

Now it so happened that Aaron and I had each a Bible in our kit. Aaron never by any means read any other book, and he knew his Bible intimately from cover to cover, and could give text and verse much more quickly than I could even with the help of the concordance which was in mine, so I asked Aaron to produce his Bible if it would bring any comfort to the wretched man who was soon to be launched into the unknown.

Aaron presented the Book to the assembly, but none seemed ready to undertake the task

[1] A term applied to a poor white man in the southern states of America.

of reading when they had got it. After a little awkward pause, there was a general request that Aaron himself should read. I feared that this would nonplus my friend. But without a moment's hesitation he opened the Bible and read quite slowly and distinctly the last chapter in the New Testament—perhaps the most beautiful and touching chapter in the whole Bible.

Aaron read, as he spoke, with the quaint old-fashioned New England drawl; and the group of roughish men seemed more or less touched as they quietly listened, with bowed heads and hats off, perhaps thinking of boyhood's vanished years, the old homestead, and a mother's loving care and teaching.

When Aaron finished reading, the men asked him to leave his Bible with them, saying they would pay him whatever price he deemed proper to ask. But this Aaron explained was impossible, as it was the gift of his mother, and he had carried it carefully all his life. The men looked glum and disappointed, but at this crisis I came forward and said that I would be much pleased if they would accept my Bible, and I could replace it when I got into civilized parts. At this the landlord of the "Last Chance" spoke

up, and seemed to voice the sentiments of the whole community, for they all murmured assent.

"Stranger," said the landlord, "Full-Moon City thanks you down to the ground for your real generous and muchly valued gift!" ("Hear, hear!" from several men.) "But when you mentioned about getting to *civilized parts* by and by, we think you made a mistake—for you *are* in civilized parts *now*, and don't you forgit it. If we haven't got the doggoned howling swells of Paris, London, and New York, with all their bad ways, so much the worse for them, and we can do very well without 'em. We air a plain, simple people, with plain old-fashioned customs and laws, and we run this city on them lines, and we want ter know what's the matter, anyhow!" There was another emphatic chorus of approval, at which the landlord seemed much pleased, for he invited all hands to drink ere they proceeded with what he termed "their duties as citizens of Full-Moon City."

Aaron and I were politely included in the invitation, and as it is a deadly insult in the West to refuse a drink, of course we promptly accepted, and I found myself standing at the bar alongside of the unfortunate man who was the principal in the strange assembly! He was

drinking a double portion, which no doubt had been provided by the kindly landlord in recognition of the man's trying position.

The only one who did not participate in the "Last Chance" hospitality was the silent form rolled in his blankets, lying on a roughly made hand-bier, and utterly regardless of that life and excitement of which he was an interested member only yesterday!

After the refreshment the men formed up, three on each side of the bier. Immediately in rear of the dead man marched the criminal, placed there as chief mourner, I suppose, which no doubt he was. The rest of the citizens marched two and two, forming a long funeral *cortège*, which slowly wound its way out of the "city" on a trail which led to a muddy creek and some straggling, half-dead trees. Arrived at these the procession halted in perfect silence. A man very expeditiously threw a stout lariat over the lower limb of a tree, and then proceeded to put the noose over the condemned man's neck. At that moment an Indian squaw rushed with a wild unearthly scream into the crowd of men, and with a quick dexterous jerk threw the rope off the man's neck, and with one arm clasping his shoulder, she turned and faced us,

waving her disengaged hand as she cried in broken English:

"Listen all yous men of Full-Moon! Yous all knows me, 'Dawenda'! Yous knows that she am a Chief's daughter, and yous knows that her father never killed one man from your town! And once when the Piutes on warpath, my father's voice alone saved Full-Moon from a heap of cinders and dead men! I knows always that if my poor man go to your town and drink firewater there would trouble come! I pray him not go, but yous all knows when white man hears of firewater he go to hell for it. I have hidden in the sage-brush for five days. Three days no eat, no drink, I watch for my man! Now if yous kills my man, I swear by your God, I shall kill me!" And she drew a shining bowie-knife from her silk sash, and looked fiercely and steadily at the group of rather nonplussed men. Then she went on.

"If yous let my poor fool-man go this time, a chief's daughter promise yous now that if my man go to yous town again I go too, and if he drink firewater *once*—I kills him sure, and yous not gets no trouble! My father is chief of the Piute nation. They are a few and weak people, but they were once a great nation and a strong

people, and when they go upon the warpath they still know how to kill and how to die."

There was a dead silence after the startling invasion of this amazon, with her wild gestures and eloquent harangue. The condemned man stood perfectly quiet and passive, apparently utterly oblivious to the terrible importance of the swiftly passing moments and events.

It was evidently puzzling the minds of the rough men—unaccustomed to the finer sentiments of human passion—just what course to pursue under the changed circumstances brought about by the advent of a wild, fierce, handsome, and withal a woman in deadly earnest. They all knew enough of Indian character to feel certain that if they proceeded with the execution the woman would kill herself, in which event (and doubtless the squaw was shrewd enough to jalouse what was passing in the men's minds) the city of Full-Moon would suffer a raid from the Indians. And beside that danger the evil memory would cling to every one of them that they had caused the death of a woman, which has always been held one of the worst crimes in Western ethics, even if the woman were only a squaw! That is, if it happened in a time of peace: if it were a time of war for land, then

the old rule held good always, "that a dead Indian was the only good Indian," either man, woman, or child.

In this dilemma the crowd in their perplexity turned to the landlord of the "Last Chance," who, if not legally, was virtually Mayor of Full-Moon City. He, with a fine self-reliance (and he really was a fine brave-looking man when he stood up and tackled anything seriously) stepped to the front and delivered himself of the following incontrovertible piece of wisdom:

"Men, ye air in a mean fix! And when men git into a tarnation fix they better git out of it in a hurry, or they git hurt. My advice is that you better take that there lariat off the tree and follow me to home, after ye have buried that there Stiff! You don't need any more religion for him, our friend here did what was proper by reading the beautifullest chapter I ever heard." There was a general response of "Thet's so!"

Then turning to the man who had had such a narrow escape, he said, "Professor, go with your squaw who has saved your checks this call. But you better mind that if ever you set foot in my bar I will drop you on sight, and don't you forgit it. For I am a man of my word and never disappoint nobody. Besides

you hev given good men a heap of trouble this time, an' we'll mind."

The released man neither by word nor sign showed the slightest relief or excitement. As a rule I have noticed that these Western men seem to have imbibed much of the Indian immobility of character, which is by no means callousness, but simply a wonderful self-control.

The fellow turned calmly away, without a word or sign, and slowly wended his way up the canyon, with his squaw walking close beside him, and I think quietly weeping, but taking good care not to let us see her emotion.

The men soon completed the burial of "that Stiff," as the landlord briefly designated the silent figure who was utterly wordless, unheeding, careless to all the turmoil and excitement around him, which, curious paradox! was actually caused by his unheeding carelessness to it all.

That night Aaron and I slept at the "Last Chance," and I rather suspect that the landlord gave us his only bed. The caravansary was merely equipped to afford refreshment to the inner man, and when the inner man was appeased, the wayfarer was supposed to betake himself to the trail, or if too sleepy for that, then to the kindly shelter of the sage-brush. But our

landlord would not allow us to depart that evening. It would have been too much like coach-horse hospitality, viz., a kick and a bucket of water. So he set his Chinese man-of-all-work to cook a supper for us, and a very good repast the celestial got up. And the best of it all was that our landlord would not take a cent from us for all his generous hospitality.

Next morning, as we were preparing to start, the citizens collected to wish us God-speed and farewell. Before mounting our steeds, and when I thought all the citizens were assembled, I presented them with the Bible I had previously promised. There was a general expression of hearty thanks and the Book was at once placed for safe keeping in the little office where the landlord kept his accounts and money under lock and key.

As Aaron and I were busy with our horses and getting our packs adjusted for a start, I did not take much notice of what the men were doing or saying. But presently there was a hush, and then I noticed that a table had been placed before the door, and on it was arranged a fine display of money, all in twenty-five cent pieces. The landlord himself stood by the table, and the motley company of citizens were grouped

around in various picturesque attitudes and attire.

"Stranger," said our host, addressing me in a quiet steady voice, but loud enough for all hands to hear, "Stranger, we citizens of Full-Moon City beg to give you our thanks for the handsome Bible you have presented to us. We really wish to thank you down to the ground for the generous gift. We have been feeling quite left-handed and uneasy since that ugly Pike stole our late lamented, as the newspaper chaps say. It was a strange thing for a Pike to steal! You would think that a bottle of whisky would have been more in his line than a Bible, but I suppose he was a religious man—though he was a Pike—and wanted to have the book along for safety.

"Now, Stranger, we wish to present to you a Bible in return, and for this purpose we have subscribed twenty-five dollars and wish you to buy the best Book obtainable for that sum when you reach *civilization*. You will notice that the twenty-five dollars are all in quarters. But that is not because we have no bigger money, it is because all hands wanted to contribute, and when I counted noses I found there were just one hundred of those human appendages pre-

sent, and our quarters exactly make up the sum required."

I have transcribed the landlord's neat speech as nearly as I could remember and record it an hour after it was delivered, but I cannot give properly his Western way of expressing himself, which was much more effective and touching than my way.

When he handed me the dollars securely tied up in a strong little canvas bag, he also gave me a sheet of paper which he said the citizens wished me to place on the front page of the Bible I purchased, I to fill in my own name in the space left for that purpose.

"We citizens of Full-Moon City present this Bible to ———. And we hope that he will be safely preserved in them *civilized parts* whereunto he is bound. Amen."

I mounted my bronco, and from that vantage made as pretty a speech as I could muster up at the moment. Then I had to hold my horse quite still while the whole crowd of men one by one calmly shook my right hand and passed on their way silently and solemnly, as if they were engaged in some religious ceremony. When all had passed, and the landlord, being the very last of the procession, had said "So long,

strangers!" Aaron and I took our way slowly and quietly up the mountain trail, in a strangely subdued sort of fashion, as if the events of the last two days had added another burden to the sorrow and to the mystery of life.

We were unusually silent for several days after the Full-Moon City episode, and hardly made any comments anent the city and its citizens. Once when I referred to their peculiar ways, and their abrupt mode of justice, Aaron remarked:

"It's mostly the effect of them doggont dry climates. Neither steel nor men's souls rust out here, and therefore folk are always on edge, and their feelin's carry them away, and they jump before they look, an' then there's trouble all round. But we are told that 'The Lord seeth not as man seeth; for man looketh on the outward appearance, but the Lord looketh on the heart.' And I guess all them Western sort of folk ain't as rough in their hearts as they look outside, and so it's a mighty good job that God and not man is to judge us all at last."

CHAPTER V

AN OASIS IN THE DESERT

When Aaron and I looked our last on Full-Moon City, the warm afternoon sun was casting its glowing rays on yellow cliffs, bare verdureless plains, and rugged ravines. Absolute silence reigned. Not a whisper of wind, not a sound or cry of man, beast, or bird disturbed the utter silence of the weird spot where had lately been enacted one of the mysterious, ceaseless tragedies of sorrow and pain, life and death, that have troubled and confused poor erring mortals from the beginning.

We followed the trail that led past the ghastly pine tree—silent witness of the uncompleted tragedy of yesterday—and then over the sun-scorched ridge where the Professor and his squaw silently took their way from their very close call at the gates of death. And so on, day after day, we plodded leisurely through sage-brush gullies, and utterly barren hills, only resting for a day or two here and there, wherever we struck water. At last, much to our satisfaction,

we sighted from a hill-top the south fork of the San Juan River. We knew that we could not reach the river that day, and as we were looking for a place to camp after an unusually hard day of dust and heat, we came upon a sight that was extra refreshing to our desert-wearied eyes, namely, a beautiful plantation of Indian corn just at that splendid stage of its growth when the plant is beginning to tassel—one of the loveliest and most useful of all the cereal crops in the world.

The plantation was perhaps forty or fifty acres in extent, and lay so low (as I learned later, for we had a happy rest here of several days) that a skilfully constructed aqueduct had been made which brought water from the river on to the only bit of possibly cultivatable land in the midst of miles and miles of utterly barren rocks and sand. This only available bit of land had been made the most of, trees had been planted at intervals around the grain land, but not near enough for their roots to do much damage to the corn crop.

The irrigated land was carefully and skilfully managed, and the resultant crops abundant. The cultivatable land was neatly subdivided into various sized fields according to the lay of the

ground, as it was absolutely necessary to have each field perfectly level so as to irrigate all equally. Every field was bounded by a narrow, but strong, stone dyke with sluices into the adjoining fields to admit or discharge water as required at planting or harvesting. All these facts, and many more interesting things, we learned during many subsequent pleasant days spent at the village.

The huts and spacious caves where the people had their abodes were immediately above the irrigated land, where they were sheltered by the dry hills at back, and by the trees in front. There were only about two hundred souls altogether in the village, so it did not make a very imposing appearance. But in this world safety often lies in obscurity, and, alas! for the unfortunate reds, this has been lamentably true whenever they have, to their sorrow, foregathered with the whites.

As Aaron and I were quietly passing through the village a dog gave us a noisy salute, and a woman came out of a hut; and although she was handsome enough in an Indian fashion, her expression was by no means benignant as she drew herself up and scowled upon us. I suppose I must have conveyed by a glance to Aaron

something of what I felt, for he said in a low tone:

"The redskins don't love white people, an' it 's no doggon'd wonder!"

While we hesitated which trail to take through the cluster of wigwams, a white man joined the woman, and they held some whispered communication with each other—evidently concerning us, for the woman never withdrew for a moment her wild eyes from Aaron and me. I dismounted and held my bridle over my arm as I politely accosted the pair, asking them which trail we should take to reach the best ford of the San Juan. The woman pointed to some bare sandy hills northward, but never said a word; however I inferred from her action that she understood my question.

I was about to remount my bronco, concluding by their manner that the silent couple did not desire to hold even the briefest converse with us, when the man came forward and, politely proffering his hand in salute, said:

"Sir, I suppose you are one of the few adventurous travellers who prefer unfrequented trails to the commonplace ways of the race—luxurious palace cars, ten thousand-ton steamships, coffee and polished shoes every morning,

and so forth. I am the only paleface in this small fragment of a once numerous tribe. I have no position of authority or influence with the redskins excepting for the fact that I am the Sachem's son-in-law, and he does me the honour to consult me upon all matters outside the immediate management of the tribe. In short I may explain my perhaps too extended introductory remarks by saying that I am the consulting Minister of Foreign Affairs. The Sachem (astutely considering that the white man does not yet exist who understands properly the subtile character of that ancient race with whom Cain cast in his lot, and whose descendants the red men are) manages the intricate internal department himself. But to revert to the pressing subject of the moment, which I ought to have attended to at first (as Abraham like a true gentleman instantly did), allow me to suggest that if you wish to resuscitate your animals, and rest yourselves, I can provide the former with provender and the safe retreat of our corral, and yourself and companion with the repose and comfort of our wigwam, and such entertainment as humble folk can provide."

All the time that he was speaking I rather

rudely stared at the man in blank amazement, not only for the wording and tone of the little speech delivered by one of the despised, and generally worthless, squawmen, but also for the dim consciousness that I had met the man before; but when or where utterly escaped my memory. At that moment, with the true feeling and simplicity of the gentleman he was in his soul, Aaron, guessing the quandary I was in, came to my rescue by saying quietly, but quite audibly enough to be heard by the man:

"I vote that we take the Professor's kind invite! We will all be the better for a good rest, and Diablo and the others are all saying ditto"; and curiously enough the wise little mule gave a cheerful, low grunt, which sounded remarkably like happy acquiescence.

Until Aaron said "Professor" I had been puzzling without success to recall when or where I had seen this strange squawman before. His voice and language recalled nothing to my mind; in fact his well chosen words and pleasantly modulated voice only added to my mystification, for these attributes are not very commonly met with on the alkali plains of Arizona. But when Aaron gave me the key to the solution by addressing the man as "Professor," I had him

placed in an instant in my mind's eye as the silent, condemned man of the Full-Moon City episode, who had escaped death by the skin of his teeth, or rather I should say by his squaw's energetic interference on his behalf.

* * * * *

Without more ado we gratefully took the turning which the Professor indicated, and presently found ourselves in a nice little corral with a partition in the middle, and the Professor intimated that the unoccupied division was at our service. It was a very snug place indeed for the comfort and security of animals. The whole corral was covered with a framework of strong timber over which were fastened palm fronds and pine tops as a shelter from the scorching summer sun and bitter winter wind. At one end, in a portion securely enclosed from too greedy mules and horses, there was a large corn-bin, and a place to hang up saddles and other horse gear, and the Professor indicated that we should put all our horse furniture there. I suppose I must have looked a bit doubtful for the safety of the tempting things in such an exposed place in the middle of an Indian village —there was no sign of a lock, only a cross bar on the door—and no doubt the Professor must

have noticed my suspicious expression, for he promptly said:

"We don't steal in this village; we have other flaws of character, but we never steal."

So we put our horse-gear in the place as directed, and having made our animals comfortable, at his invitation we followed the Professor into his wigwam, which was just the ordinary Indian abode of the permanent sort. But it was more comfortable than the general run of such places, having good glass windows, instead of the usual little wooden port-holes, a spacious front room used for general purposes, and two smaller inner chambers, one of which the Professor and his wife, Dawenda, assigned to Aaron and me. In the large front room the fire-place was, as is customary in Indian dwellings, exactly in the middle of the clay floor, with an aperture in the roof for the escape of the smoke. Dawenda's wigwam was in much better order than the ordinary run of Indian abodes. Instead of the usual higgledy-piggledy confusion which seems inherent to the red man's or red woman's domestic *ménage*, there was a pleasing arrangement noticeable, as if there was a place for everything, and everything in its place—as the sailors say. This was so apparent not only to

me, but even to Aaron—long accustomed as he was to the rough-and-tumble life of the wilderness—that I was surprised when he remarked in his quaint way, as he looked around our limited, but strictly clean, quarters:

"I guess the Professor struck luck when he found Dawenda, though she can flare up at times! But that is the sort that some soft men need, and I calculate if it hadn't been for his wife the Professor's checks would have gone in that day at Full-Moon City."

In a little while the lady herself called to us, in a remarkably pleasant voice—very different from the voice I remembered addressing the citizens of Full-Moon.

"Come," she called, "come—to—eat!" That was how the woman spoke English in her calm moods. Exactly like a child repeating its lesson. And I have noticed this slow monotonous mode of pronunciation frequently among the coloured races when they acquire a partial knowledge of English after they have reached maturity.

From a pan by the fire Dawenda gave each of us a nice looking, and a still nicer tasting, dish of parched Indian corn, and a delicious spatch-cock, done to a turn. The lady—Indian fashion—did the honours of the feast, but ate

not a morsel herself until after her husband and his guests had appeased their appetites; and it takes an astounding quantity to accomplish that after a long fast in those dry, healthy latitudes.

Aaron and I soon became accustomed to our surroundings, and passed the time of our sojourn with the Professor and Dawenda pleasantly enough. Aaron had some repairs to do to our personal effects and horse-gear, while the Professor's reminiscences, and reflections thereon, were an endless source of entertainment and profitable instruction to me.

Before the Professor and I parted he told me his full name, and some other matters which I am not at liberty to disclose: but this does not at all interfere with the sequence or sense of his reminiscences. These, told in his own simple inimitable manner, were of absorbing interest to me, and I think that even in their mutilated form they will be of interest to some other souls who may be vainly seeking to solve the insolvable mysteries of our common human nature.

Our method of life at Yellow Bluffs—that was the name of the village—was somewhat as follows: after our light morning repast, taken shortly after daybreak, Aaron would betake

himself to his various jobs, and the Professor and I would sally forth for a stroll around the cornfields, resting at times under the fine trees which were scattered at convenient distances all over the property. These trees were never planted too near the corn lest their roots should injure the crops; still near enough to allow the very tips to draw life from the "Holy water," as I always felt impelled to call water in those regions under the curse of ceaseless, deadly drought!

Always before he went out of a morning the Professor did two things; and one of them he did quite openly, "and was not ashamed": he kissed his wife heartily, telling her where we were going, and when we would return. On these occasions it was both beautiful and touching to see how the simple squaw would blush like a young girl, and her black eyes sparkle with a wonderful splendour! The other thing that he did was to slip rather surreptitiously into some one of his ample pockets one of several medium-sized volumes which constituted his library. This library comprised among others the New Testament in Greek, Homer's Iliad ditto, Josephus, the Old Testament, and three small volumes of Shakespeare, in English.

Then we would wander along, the Professor examining irrigation matters, the ingress and egress of the numerous little gates which regulated the supply of the life-giving fluid to each field. I learned afterwards that it was no wonder the Professor took a deep interest in the proper adjustment of the water, for he it was who had arranged the intricate system from its inception to its successful completion. Not only did he do this, but he made a dangerous and very wearisome journey to the proper authorities to legally pre-empt the square mile allowed by law. Otherwise—as had happened to the foolish redskins before—after they got a place into good shape, some enterprising explorer on the look-out to better himself and his interesting family would quietly slip in and take possession of the nicely irrigated spot! And the whole world, or as much of it as heard of the clever incident, would loudly applaud the enterprising citizen, and congratulate themselves on the satisfactory advance of *freedom* and *civilization.* Alas, my fellow Christians! as I think of it all there comes into my mind the brave Madame Roland's apostrophe to the goddess whom men so blaspheme by their conduct: "O liberty, what crimes are committed in thy name!"

One day the Professor gave me a most touching synopsis of his life. And ever since that revelation of the man's nobility, and alas, degradation, I have held his history secretly recorded in the log-book of my heart, among many other tender memories of the past. The Professor has now passed beyond the reach of praise or blame. But I am still bound to preserve his name in the strictest incognito: therefore I shall continue to use the old, familiar, honourable appellation to which I am accustomed, and to which he was entitled, the name I always used in all our intercourse—an intercourse which was altogether delightful and instructive to me, in spite of its sad commencement at Full-Moon City.

On a calm delicious day in the early spring, when the Professor and I were reading and comparing his Greek Testament with the Authorized Version—or I should say he was reading the Greek and giving me its exact meaning in English—we gradually drifted into comparing notes on the learning and methods of the ancients and the moderns—and I may say not much to the glorification of the latter. Something cropped up in our study of the never solved mysteries of life, and the dire

influence of the grosser bodily power of our human nature over the purer spiritual power of our souls; something I said seemed to awaken sleeping memories of the past, for the Professor closed his book with a snap, put it in his pocket, and said:

"Now I will give you a little history on this momentous subject which may assist you to find the right trail amid the many pitfalls of life, although it is too late for me to *tak' tent.*"

CHAPTER VI

THE PROFESSOR'S REMINISCENCES

"FIFTY-TWO years ago," said the Professor, "I made my *début* as a mewling atom of humanity, in the old seaport town of New Haven. In those days, and in those parts, men and women were altogether a different kind of people from what they are nowadays. They were absolutely honest, absolutely truthful, and withal absolutely orthodox in doctrine. Here or there might be found a man or woman who deviated from the accepted standard, but then one might also find a person who had gone raving mad, and had to

be taken to the lunatic asylum in Boston. But a case of either sort was of extremely rare occurrence.

"My undistinguished ancestors had been, or I should rather say *were* (for people lived long in those days) of the sort 'that go down to the sea in ships.' And the wonderful and terrible ocean has been my passion and delight since babyhood. But like so many other things which mortals passionately prize and love, I have had less companionship with the sea than most people. For excepting my voyage to Europe —to absorb the combined wisdom of the world at the renowned brain-work show of Heidelberg, and the return voyage to mine own land, I have never been on that strange element which constitutes the greater part of our globe—that weird element which has defied with scorn all the mental and physical power of man to control. And only *One*, in all the countless ages of this distraught planet, has commanded its rage to cease, and been instantly obeyed!

"It is sorrowful to observe the passionate desire of my countrymen and countrywomen, especially of the humbler sort, for that which is supposed to be education of the mind, but which is merely a process of stuffing the brain of youth

with a useless and injurious compound, just as a cook spoils a wholesome tomato with a lot of indigestible, useless stuff. Both processes are only a perverted usage of good things in these modern days of visionary ideals. The highest and the best minds begin to perceive their mistake, and wish to return to the simple and true lines which made strong, brave, industrious men, and happy, virtuous women. But there is no returning on the road of life, the strongest and bravest are trodden to death if they do not keep step with the mob and worship the fetish they have set up.

"After my return from the filibustering raid upon the Solons of Europe, I was offered, and accepted, the Chair of Philosophy in my Alma Mater. This was, of course, a great honour for one without a "pull"—that is the classical term in modern language, I believe—and was, moreover, a great triumph and happiness to my father and mother. Ah! if the dear souls had only known at what an expense of nerve and brain stamina I had won the useless battle, it would have broken their self-sacrificing hearts. But, thank God, they fell into the last, long, dreamless sleep in blessed ignorance of my less than useless triumph.

"You must understand that I am only telling you of my own weak self. But if it were necessary, or would serve any useful purpose, I could tell you history after history of human wreckage caused by perverted methods of cultivating the mind of youth, that would harrow your soul with horror. Half the misery of life is the result of weakened intellect and lost will-power caused by the very system which foolish mortals have declared the panacea which will open men's eyes and make them like gods—as the wily serpent persuaded poor foolish Eve—whereas we are told on the highest authority that 'the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God.'

"The man I killed at Full-Moon City was my bosom friend. We had studied together at Heidelberg, and had been more or less companions ever since. But through our weakened nervous systems we both fell victims to the demon alcohol, and at last, after many quarrels, we quarrelled to the death over a silly Latinism which an average school-boy would have explained in five minutes.

"Of course, long before this sorrow, which has darkened my life, happened, both my friend and I had lost touch with what is called civilization—man's great achievement, and that which

cherishes with tender assiduity the demon that has been our undoing. Then we naturally took Greely's advice: 'Go West, young man, go West!' But, alas, we went without the energy and hope which turn that good advice to profit. Instead of that we went with the loafer's aimless method of passing a worthless life. We had neither means nor plans. Sometimes we would get a ride from a compassionate teamster, and sometimes we would manage to get a lift for several miles awkwardly balanced on the girders under railway carriages. But that was not only an uneasy, but also a dangerous mode of travelling, for now and then an ill-natured official would let off a pistol to scare us 'fourth-class passengers,' as they called free riders. And sometimes they did more than scare us. There is a mark," said the Professor, baring his arm, "made by a bullet in that playful fashion!

"So my friend and I drifted into the Far West. It was a ruder West then than it is at the present day, and, as you are aware, it is not quite a sinless Arcadia even yet. There were many more aborigines in the country than there are now. But the demoniac curse of the 'devil-in-solution' which the so-called civilized nations force upon all barbarous people with whom they

come in contact, was rapidly solving the Indian question by sending the poor red men out of this world altogether.

"You see there was a profit both ways. First there was the profit on the whisky, and then there was the profit of getting the red man's country without the bother and expense of blankets, and surveying lands as Indian reserves which only had to be re-taken under some plausible lie or other, when civilized people wanted the lands to settle on. Then, of course, the wild, maddened red men went gathering scalps, poor fools! and the civilized men went after them with all the beautiful modern inventions for wholesale slaughter. And presently there was great rejoicing and thanksgiving prayers for deliverance of the civilized people from the awful barbarism of the savages. And the silent stars looked down upon dead men, women, and children. And so the palefaces prospered, and civilization spread apace in the land.

* * * * *

"After an exceedingly aggravating case of ejecting this people, with whom I am now connected, from their undoubted rightful land lying along the San Juan River, the tribe

adopted a safe mode of revenge by secretly killing all whites who fell into their hands, without leaving a single mark of violence on the body. Of course, this did not restore their stolen lands, but it afforded their wild hearts a sort of consolation in that it gave the district a bad name among the palefaces as being an unhealthy locality.

"My friend and I had parted some time before I fell into the hands of the Piutes. Neither of us could resist the Fiend, and it led to such frequent quarrels that at last, in a thoroughly sober state (for lack of that which had been our undoing) we parted in profound sorrow, but well knowing that it was absolutely our only safe course.

"Shortly after this lamentable parting I struck the San Juan River, and while I was wandering along the bank seeking for some means of getting over to the southern side, I fell in with an encampment of this very tribe with whom I have been domiciled ever since. As I entered the village, a momentary glance revealed only too plainly to my accustomed senses the scene upon which I had fallen. Several men were lying about in the blazing sunshine in a helpless state of intoxication;

others, in a maudlin condition, were quarrelling, and fighting more or less seriously with each other, or amusing themselves—drunken men's fashion all over the world—by thrashing their women.

"As I turned the corner of a wigwam, I came across a man of splendid physique holding a young, delicate-looking woman by the hair, and beating the life out of her with his free fist. It has always touched me with a sort of madness to see a woman struck by a man. I don't mind so much seeing two women at fisticuffs. It is by no means unnatural, and they very rarely injure themselves seriously. It is mostly their head-gear and frills which suffer, especially if these articles are attractive-looking.

"On the impulse of the moment I jumped at the man and, without considering consequences, laid him flat with a neat buffet, the art of which I had acquired at Heidelberg—one of the few useful arts I did acquire at that famous institution of learning.

"The man lay quiet enough, and I should have passed on and taken no more heed, but, with wild yells, three or four of the least incapable of the bacchanalians rushed upon me, and I should have come to an end there and

then had not the girl I rescued from the big savage come to my assistance.

"I have all those bygone happenings recorded in shorthand—which is another of my wasted accomplishments—so I am practically giving you the story item by item exactly as it took place.

"The girl drew her fine presence to its full height between me and the onrushing fiends, and with a grandeur which our teaching completely obliterates from the children of Nature she warned the fellows off, and they slunk back like corrected children. And I remember quite distinctly thinking at the moment, that it was a fine triumph of mind over matter. I thought then, and—with my added knowledge of red men—I know now, that these men in their drunken fury would have instantly killed me that day, but for the opportune intervention of the brave girl.

"'Go back to your white man's pig's drink. Your chief's daughter commands you. Begone!'

"And the great hulking savages slunk away like whipped hounds, although they were only castigated by the flashing eyes and sharp tongue of a girl. What a pity it is that the palefaces have, by their spurious methods of training

youth, obliterated this wholesome sense of shame from their own race!

"That was danger number one safely past. But Dawenda—for it was she—had even at that early stage of our acquaintanceship determined to save my life. And I may remark *en passant* that the swift decision of this Indian girl, and the clever manner in which she carried out her plan, added another proof to my already preconceived opinion that woman, if she is the weaker partner physically, is the wiser and cleverer mentally. And I am convinced that the deplorable failures of civilization have been, and are, greatly owing (after, of course, the awful and mysterious power of Satan) to the fact that women have been rigidly debarred from any share in legislation, and the whole management, or rather mismanagement, of government has been jealously kept in the hands of men. Men in the aggregate are stupid, dense, and utterly lack the innate quick perception possessed by women. And, moreover, men are so inordinately vain and self-opinionated that they rarely achieve true wisdom, only a kind of superficial flowery claptrap which has been their stock-in-trade from the beginning. Here and there, through the weary ages, a few truly wise men

have appeared from time to time, but so sparsely that the mob soon disposed of them.

"Dawenda gave a hurried look to her father (for it was indeed her progenitor I had laid low), and, ascertaining that he was enjoying the profound sleep of the drunken, and apparently not suffering at all from my blow—she beckoned me to follow her, saying the one suitable word, 'Come!' Dawenda told me, in course of time, that she had learned her little stock of English from an old Franciscan father who taught a little bunch of Indian children according to his lights.

"'Come!' repeated the girl rather imperatively, and I promptly obeyed, somehow feeling in my heart that she was absolutely dependable and true, as I have proved every hour of my life since that memorable day.

"Dawenda intimated by word and sign that my life depended upon much haste, and we hurried along for half an hour or so. Then we came to a circular hollow, one of the hollows made by volcanic action when America was building. The place was thinly covered with sage-brush and scattered rocks. Here Dawenda tore up a young bush by the roots, telling me to do the same, and as we went cautiously along she vigorously whipped on each side, calmy ex-

plaining that, "'too many bad Rattlers in this place. If bite, man dead quick.'

"That there were 'too many' was quite perceptible, for as we proceeded the wicked creatures scuttled hither and thither with that startling rattle which God has provided them with to warn careless men of the horrible things. I have often wondered since that day which made me intimately acquainted with the deadly creatures, whether it was a rattler that deceived our mother Eve, and if the fiend played his most melodious tune to further confuse and beguile her innocent soul. Alack-a-day! 'Behold how great a matter a little fire kindleth!'

"When we had crossed this dangerous ground we entered a low, rocky aperture which gradually expanded into a spacious cave with a curious rent in the roof through which I could discern a little space of blue sky that lightened the cave in a dim sort of fashion when one's eyes became accustomed to the semi-twilight. As usual with such places, the cave was mostly broken into jagged ledges, very difficult to get over, excepting here and there where there happened to be a level piece of ancient lava, as smooth and hard as a pavement of Portland cement.

"We scrambled along as best we could, until we were nearly under the strange split which admitted the dim light to the cave. And I hope I was duly thankful for even the small portion of that most blessed element the value of which we never quite know until we lose it. Had it not been for the modicum of light mercifully afforded me that day, I would certainly have broken my neck in the treacherous holes and fissures, or been cut to pieces by the terrible lava. Of course Dawenda could skip over such places like a wild cat, but I question if even she could have piloted me through the weird place had it not been for the far streak of blessed blue sky.

"At last Dawenda paused in a little clear space in the midst of the piles of lava, and, indicating the smooth bit of flooring by a wave of her hand, said:

"'Here you sleep! I go for grub and water. You lie still—Indian no come, he fear Great Spirit. If you go out you die!'

"The girl was gone like a flash. And what with excitement, and bodily exertion, feeling dead tired, I spread my poncho and lay down comfortably to await the issue of my adventure. I must have fallen asleep although I did not intend to sleep—but we do many things which

we do not intend—for I dreamt a terrible dream about being dead and in my grave without coffin, or covering of any kind, and Indians were lowering a dead man into the same grave! I awoke with (as I thought) a great cry, but I learned afterwards that I made no sound whatever. When I recovered full consciousness I found Dawenda kneeling beside me, and whispering:

"'No speak, no move! Indian bring dead man from San Juan, to put in grave. Then go—no come back!'

"I had sense enough to obey Dawenda's whispered admonition, and lay absolutely quiet, but thinking 'a wheen o' things,' as your countrymen say.

"The Indians soon completed their task, and in half an hour or less the last man—or I should rather say, the party, for every man of them took good care not to be the *last*, as that is the danger zone when spirits are about—had vanished. After a careful scrutiny, Dawenda declared the coast clear, and I concluded that we were pretty safe then, for I knew enough even at that time of the Indian's dread of spirits to feel certain that the bravest man or woman in the tribe would not linger alone in a burial cave

for all the gold in the West. Perhaps you may say that I am forgetting that Dawenda lingered in that dismal place in defiance of the ghosts which she must have known were watching us from every quarter. But that is another story altogether, and when women, red or white, take to sacrificing themselves—poor things!—there is no limit to their self-immolation.

"Dawenda had brought a demijohn of water, a dish of parched corn, and a nicely grilled trout. She spread these luxuries before me, sat down, and said 'Eat!' This I proceeded to do at once; and although that day is many a long year in the past, yet whenever I taste a trout done over the fire to a turn, I see that great ghostly cave with its uncertain shadows, its sprinkling of light from the high roof, and a beautiful Indian girl watching me with evident satisfaction as I demolish the good things, and she never taking a morsel herself. But that is the way with the feminines, and we masculines can only look at them with an incredulous stare, and ejaculate like Noah Claypole, 'Lor', how queer!' But it never interferes with our appetites.

"When I had quite finished my meal, and thanked my hostess, she said 'Good!' and proceeded to put things in order. Then from a

crevice in the rocks she produced a package wrapped in leaves, and laid it before me, with the following important advice:

"'This for two eats to-morrow! But if eat little small, more better, then three eats! water in demijohn for two days, take much care—no water this side San Juan. I go! not come back for two nights, one day! I get old Manitou Teacher make my father good. He much like kill you! very bad thing strike great chief! but Dawenda save you or she die too!' and the girl turned a pair of flashing eyes upon me, that actually glittered in the dim light. Then with another warning, 'If go anywhere, you lost,' she was gone over the rocks with the lightness of a bird, and I was left to my own delectable company for two nights and a day, as Dawenda had foretold, and they were the longest periods of time I ever spent in my life.

"Then to my intense relief, for I verily believe I became half demented with the utter loneliness and terrible silence of the place, the girl, with a happy cry, leapt before me, and I was so overjoyed at her welcome presence that I clasped her in my arms with a glad wild shout that made the echoes reverberate again and again. Dawenda did not struggle or seem to

resent my rather familiar greeting, and so I kissed her with much satisfaction, although with some sharp qualms of conscience.

"After a good repast of the nice things Dawenda had again brought, I had the most delicious smoke I ever enjoyed in my life, although it only consisted of the plain tobacco leaf mixed with the peculiarly cured elm bark, Indian fashion. But never in the heyday of youth and glory did the most delicate Latakia appeal with such potency and magic to my olfactory nerves as did that splendid smoke which my good girl had brought, and which at the end of my feast she produced in great triumph, together with flint and steel complete. Here I may remark that *completeness* is one of my good wife's strong characteristics. If any business has to be done she never leaves the least detail to chance, or luck, as so many fools misname the devil of laziness and procrastination. But indeed these evil qualities were rarely found in the Indian make up before they were transformed into a worthless, lazy lot by our belauded civilization.

"While I was quietly enjoying my pipe, Dawenda unfolded her plans as follows. And although they seemed a bit rash under the cir-

cumstances, I instinctively felt that whatever course she advised must be the wisest to pursue.

" ' Good, you come see the Sachem my father. He much glad his men no kill you that day! He speak me you come his lodge, eat, smoke, sleep, make friends. Come!'

" I did not know Indian character then as I do now, and in my white, vain wisdom thought it would be the height of folly to put myself in the power of a drunken bloodthirsty savage! For in my heart of hearts I felt certain that redskins would murder palefaces with the greatest satisfaction whenever they had an opportunity. I was brought up with these notions. And although my parents and their neighbours had never even seen an Indian (they had all been killed off, or driven West, and their lands appropriated before my parents were born), yet the dread of even the name of the valiant, vanished race was the most effectual method of quieting an obstreperous child, when I was at that interesting stage of existence. I have learned much in the progress of my educational curriculum, but perhaps the best part of it all has been *un*learning things which I should never have learned at all, and the misrepresentation of Indian character is one of those things.

"So it ended in my responding to Dawenda's 'Come!' with 'Ready! About face! March!' and the girl and I were out of the dismal cave in a jiffy, and shaping our course for her father's village, both of us very silent, and I think with more anxiety in our souls than we cared to acknowledge even to our own individual hearts.

"As we emerged from the canyon, and were nearing the river, we came upon a little clearing in the scrub, of an acre or two in extent, with a nice field of maize and other crops, and here and there some fine trees, under one of which was a neat little 'Rancho,' as they call a hut out in the West, and a white man was kneeling near by, apparently weeding some vegetable beds. All this I took in at a glance. And when we reached the gate of the little farm we were quite near the busy man, who did not see us until Dawenda saluted him with a little curtsey and 'Good morning, Father.'

"With a pleasant smile upon his pleasant face, the 'Father,' as Dawenda addressed him, came forward, saying:

"'Ah! bon jour, ma petite Mademoiselle Dawenda, I hope my pupil is well, and may I know Monsieur?'

"Dawenda smiled, evidently well pleased at

having the task of introducing two white men to each other, one of whom had proved his worthiness by years of faithful service to her people, and the other, as the poor child judged by the teleology of the heart, was also worthy of perfect trust.

"Turning to the priest, with the mien of a chief's daughter, as she is, Dawenda gave the father the position of honour by naming me first.

"'Mon père, this is Monsieur le Professeur!' Then to me, 'Monsieur, this is the good teacher, Father Conrad, who teached me speak English and French.'

"The old father laughed a good, hearty, honest laugh, like the honest man that he was, and said:

"'Well done, Dawenda, never hide your candle under a bushel. We have Scripture for that. And I am proud to have *teached* my friend the Sachem's daughter 'to speak English and French.'"

"After that we were all on excellent terms. Dawenda quietly asked the father to go with us to the village, and 'speak' to her father. But the wise old Priest said that he was very busy that morning, and, besides, he had nothing par-

ticular to 'speak' to her father about. But Dawenda still pressed him to go with us, and at last the old man good-humouredly consented, donned his chapeau, pulled the door to, and, with staff in hand, cried in a cheery voice, 'en avant, mes enfants, en avant!"

"And so on we went, with no outward signs save those of good comradeship. But in my heart there was a strange foreboding that my fate was sealed, the day of my destiny over, and the old life past for ever. It was all as plain to me as a printed book. Perhaps it was telepathy, but whatever it was it was certainly true.

* * * * *

"Father Conrad, Dawenda, and I reached the Indian village about noon. And as is Indian fashion, and as is paleface custom also, the bucks were lolling around wherever they could find a bit of shade, smoking, chatting, and taking their ease; while the squaws—again paleface habit also—were hard at domestic duties, washing, cooking, nursing papooses, and all the innumerable etceteras, which the lordly male designates 'woman's work.' But wait a little, my lords and gentlemen! 'Votes for women' are on the way, and, oh the revelations and dumbfounderments that await our side—some-

thing like a fair division of the good things of life, as well as the evil. For instance, fifty admonitions of the cat-o'-nine-tails for the first thrashing a man gives his wife, then a hundred for the second offence, and so on and so forth. Oh there are terrible times coming, my brothers! 'Men's hearts failing them for fear.' If a man only happens to look a bit cross at the wife, off she goes to the *Lady Beak*, or sends you there in charge of one of the kids to take your medicine like a lamb. Oh! there are hard times a-coming, my poor brothers, and don't you forget it."

So the Professor would rattle on when he fell into the humour, depicting an impossible state of human affairs that made one's blood run cold. But *is* it impossible? Ah, there's the rub. We must just "wait and see," as the Prime Minister told us to do, and I must get on with the Professor's story.

"We struck the village at the very spot where I had nearly forfeited my life on account of laying the Chief by the heels for doing that which is quite proper in Indian ethics, and paleface ethics also, I believe, namely, chastising his own daughter.

"Now all signs of the late bacchanalian orgies had disappeared and the whole camp was quiet

and orderly. Dawenda led the way to the largest wigwam, which stood a little apart from the others, and which had the additional advantage of a wide though loosely-constructed veranda, affording a delightful shade from the fierce Arizona sun.

"After inviting the father and me to enter, Dawenda set a rather ricketty chair for Père Conrad and an old kerosene box for me. Then merely saying "I go find father!" she disappeared into the wigwam, and I think passed out by another door into the field beyond. The priest and I being thus left to our own resources, we naturally fell into discoursing upon our surroundings.

"The father told me that he had been domiciled in his present abode for thirty years. 'I think,' said the fast-ageing man, with a wistful expression in his clear blue eyes, 'that I have been forgotten by my brothers. It is so easy to get out of touch with one's friends in this vast land, that I sometimes really think I have been forgotten. But that does not matter at all, for we can fulfil our life's task anywhere and under all conditions, if we only obey the Master's commands.

"'"Whatsoever ye would that men should

do to you, do ye even so to them." And it is wonderful how one can become content, nay, quite happy, if one makes this his rule of life, even under circumstances which outwardly may appear intolerable.[1]

"'If I had been told (when I came here in all the vigour of young manhood, and with dreams of a career in the great world of men of my own race) just what my life was to be; muddling along with these poor red men, women, and children; I should have petitioned God for surcease of life with such earnest supplications as are always granted. But the madness has long passed and I have learned philosophy in this wise and I am content. Nay, I am not only content, but I can repeat these lines after my nightly orisons with profound gratitude for the past, the present, and the hope of the future. They were written to *one* I lost in the wilderness of this world, and who can never fulfil the request personally. But that does not matter, for the lines have fulfilled their spiritual purpose, and the prayer has been answered.

[1] I remember thinking at the time that it was very curious that the Professor's learned old priest should quote the exact adage which Aaron Slocum, the unlearned man, also quoted as being a most efficacious rule of conduct.

THE REQUEST

Lay me to sleep where I will not hear
The wailing of men in endless toil;
Lay me to sleep with never a tear,
Only a sigh and only a smile,
A sigh, dear heart, for thine and thee,
A smile, and only a smile, for me.

Lay me to sleep where the summer sun
Will warm my heart that is growing cold;
When all this weary toil is done,
Lay me to sleep where in days of old
We wander'd beside the magic sea,
And dreamt our dreams of the years to be.

And then! yes, then those blessed dreams
Will find fulfilment for you and me;
And back from isles where the rainbow gleams,
Our argosies come o'er the sapphire sea,
Laden with spices and jewels and gold,
We went forth to seek in the days of old!

Ah yes! dear heart, when the heat is past,
And the sweet shade falls in the afternoon,
I know we shall find at last, at last!
What we sought like children, too soon, too soon!
For toil comes first, and then cometh rest—
And God in His mercy He knoweth best!'

* * * * *

"By-and-by Dawenda came back leading her father by the hand, or rather her father was leading Dawenda. At the time I refer to, Chief

Atchewan was a tall handsome man, of some forty or forty-five years of age. He was the undisputed Chief of a small section of the once powerful Piutes who had suffered much at the hands of the palefaces. First of all they were decimated by the Spaniards, and afterwards harried almost to extinction by our people.

"And as the Sachem came quietly forward he looked a very different man from the murderous savage he was when I knocked him down. He courteously greeted the Priest, and then he took my hand, saying what I judged by the tone to be some kindly words, which his daughter interpreted as, 'My father say you welcome.'

"After this gracious greeting from the Chief, I felt a good deal more at my ease. For until that assurance by Atchewan, I certainly had some very uncomfortable forebodings as to my reception.

"The introductions over in proper form (the red, brown, or black man can beat the paleface hollow in the grace and proper ceremony of introductions) the Chief set about the hospitable duties of a host. He provided Père Conrad with a more substantial chair, then, setting my box against the wall, he spread thereon a nice soft poncho which made a very comfortable seat

indeed. After seeing his guests at their ease —true hospitality, you observe—the Sachem threw a sheep-skin on the floor for himself, and quietly squatting down in that graceful and easy position unattainable by the civilized, he lighted and passed around the pipe of peace.

"In the meantime the women of the household, under Dawenda's supervision, were preparing a feast of welcome. When the entertainment was ready, and after the Priest had duly said grace, we fell to, and although none of the women—not even the Chief's wife or daughter—touched a morsel, yet the old Priest, the Chief, and myself played the rôle of trenchermen so admirably, that when we finally retired from the festive board, and re-lit the pipe of peace, I fear there was not much left for the kind patient creatures who had provided the splendid feast. But these mild qualms hardly trouble men's souls at all, they are so accustomed to be considered the lords of creation, and the cosmos of things as far as women are concerned. But as I have previously remarked—there's a sad awakening on the way for men's souls. And their lordships will have to take a back seat, and let the lordesses have a turn at arranging matters, and then we shall learn some strange lessons.

"When everything was arranged, and the men and women of the household had assembled under the shade of the wide veranda, every one dressed in his or her best, Dawenda and her mother especially gay, I began to jalouse that there was some serious matter on the old Chief's mind; and my strange forebodings of the morning again flooded my mind like weird dreams of the night—wordless and meaningless, save for the shadowy ghosts pointing to the long path of wasted years, dead hopes, and lost loves—dreams, alas! from which I think we never wholly awaken until we also are only dreams—and perhaps not even then.

"When all were gathered, the Sachem with a dignified gesture commanded attention; and, in his own language of course, spoke quietly, and quite distinctly—as is the good habit of his race—for nearly an hour. And if a speaker is not a bungler of thoughts and words and sentences (and certainly the Chief was not one of that sort), he can say a great deal in that time.

"Then it fell to the duty of Père Conrad to give me a translation of the Sachem's speech.

"'I can't do the Chief justice,' said the father. 'I am neither a Piute, nor an English

scholar, and I know that I shall mutilate the Sachem's poetical sentences badly! But I will do my best. And as one of your own poets has truly said:

> 'Who does the best his circumstance allows
> Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.'

"Atchewan spoke slowly and distinctly, making a little pause now and then to allow the interpreter to overtake, and give me the exact meaning of every sentence, even if he missed a word here or there.

"'Wanderer from the North,' that of course meant me, 'Teacher from the great Manitou! And my family! Listen!—I wish you all well. Some may think that the wish of a poor, landless redskin will avail you little, but it is all I have to give you! And I will tell you our history, for I fear that many of you have lost the astuteness of mind which all our fathers possessed, and have fallen into that careless, unwholesomeness of mind, which is the state of all people who are oppressed generation after generation. This I know. And even Père Conrad (who does not tell one kind of story to-day, and another kind to-morrow) has told me that "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick!" There-

fore it is no wonder that we are a sick, worthless people. But the great Manitou is Judge. Now listen to this true history of our race.

* * * * *

"'Long ago—thousands of moons—white men came into our land from the South. They came professing to teach us a better way than our own. But they simply enslaved us, and made us beasts of burden to enrich themselves. And my people lived, and died hopelessly for many generations. Then another race of palefaces came from the East, and seized the land from the first robbers, and we fell into a worse plight than ever. In the former regime we had various privileges, such as bits of land allotted for our own use, which we were allowed to cultivate by moonlight, or at any odd time when our *patróns* had nothing for us to do. Of course that was very seldom, still it was always something. But under the new-comers we had no more privileges than the coyotes. We were driven from the old *Haciendas* where we at least had a right to be, if it were only the right of pigs! Still, we had food to eat, and straw to sleep on. But when the new palefaces came and drove our former masters South to the land from whence they came, they also

drove us away from our little ranchos, because they wanted the land for themselves. And besides that they hated redskins—which our former masters did not—merely treating us as they treated their horses and other cattle. Sometimes petting us when we worked very hard, and at other times whipping us if we did not work hard enough. But the new-comers hated us at all times, and chased the few of us who remained into the mountains, and to these arid wastes, where nothing exists naturally save coyotes and rattlers. Then, when we were sometimes driven mad by all the sufferings and injustice we endured, and took food which was grown upon lands which were ours by all the just laws of God or man, we were hunted like wild beasts, our men, women, and children slaughtered, and their scalps borne off in triumph by the very men who expressed furious indignation at us for sometimes taking scalps in legitimate warfare!

"'Now, when the redskins are reduced to such a pitifully small remnant that the palefaces no longer slaughter them wholesale, they do that which is worse, because it prolongs our misery. They give us poor fools what they term "A Perpetual Reservation," which is an extensive

tract of unproductive land in some part of the country, very far from what they call "civilization," which name signifies the place where they make plans to despoil the red men, and where they say that a dead Indian is the only good Indian.

"'By-and-by, when the palefaces become too many for their own lands—which is very soon, for they increase like rabbits—and when they see that we have made our lands produce crops in spite of its barrenness, there is a demand to open *our Reserves* for settlement, which being done (of course, according to law, the white man's easy and safe method of stealing), the palefaces rush into our lands, and we have to flee for our lives, and again become wanderers and vagabonds on the face of that portion of the earth which the great Manitou apportioned to us at the beginning, as He apportioned the land beyond the big-water to the palefaces, and where they should have stayed, not come to us with their wily hearts, and lying lips, and their evil thing called *civilization*.' Here the Chief paused a few moments as if to gather his thoughts. And Père Conrad, looking at me with a serio-comic expression on his old brown face, said quietly:

"'If the Sachem gives us much more on these lines, you and I will feel hurt in our tenderest feelings, like the lawyer in Scripture who complained, "Master, thus saying thou reproachest us also." The priest turned to go on with the interpretation of Atchewan's speech, but the Chief and his family sat perfectly calm, keenly watching the father's every movement and expression of lip or eye, for Indians judge a man's feelings more by his silent expression than by his spoken words. Then the Sachem went on:

"'After many changes of our camps, I and my few people have been driven far from our hereditary lands, and unaided we shall never find a safe permanent resting-place until we find our graves, and it is not certain that our bones shall find an undisturbed rest even then, for the palefaces love to collect the bones of the dead for the purpose of ornamenting their show houses. But that does not matter, for by then the merciful Manitou will have taken our happy spirits to a blessed land, where—as the Père has often told us—"Liars and murderers cannot come."

"'For long I have known that I must find that rare creature, an honest white man, to join

my family and tribe. He must be not only honest, but brave and clever, capable of meeting his race dauntlessly and knowing all the tricks and windings of that which they call *Law*, —according to which land when stolen remains the perpetual property of the thief. And we wish him to be able to tell us when the pale-faces mean evil and war in their hearts, though they speak words of peace and love with their lips.

"'Besides, we wish to avail ourselves of a custom which the white people have. Any man who is what they call a "citizen" can obtain a large block of land by simply living upon it. This we have tried many times, but whether it is because we are not "citizens" or even not men at all, I do not know. But whenever the white men came along with their squaws and papooses and took a liking to our "Reservation" (as the great Father in Washington calls the lands which are given to Indians) they would make a law among themselves, declaring the Reservation open to settlement, and then they would rush in, almost or quite killing each other in their eagerness to take possession of the land and crops which we supposed were ours. And if the foolish Indians attempt to resist these in-

vaders there is a great cry raised, to wit, that the murderous redskins are again on the war-path. And the white soldiers are sent out to kill every Indian they can find, and thereby teach us a lesson. Which is a very effective lesson indeed, and the only way that white men know how to make red men into good men.

"'Knowing all these facts from my childhood up, and having suffered several *removals* (as they are called) at the hands of the people who preach "Thou shalt not covet," I now, as a last resource, wish to find a white man who is fearless, and will act fair, and who understands the chicanery of his own race. I have been looking for such a man for years, and at last I think I have found one. If he joins us, I and my people will be his people, and will always—after due consideration—take his views as of first importance in all things concerning the management of the land, and the *laws* of the white men.

"'We know of a tract of good land south of the San Juan, into which we think water can be led, and if that is proved upon careful examination to be possible, then our white brother shall pre-empt that land according to white law. And there we shall rest in peace under the care of

our white brother, and grow abundance of food under our own rules and customs. And if this happy state is accomplished, one of our first rules shall be that whosoever brings fire-water into our village shall die.' At this drastic *pronunciamiento* I was astonished to hear a low but decided grunt of acquiescence from the whole audience, but they knew their weakness, poor things, and in their hearts hated the fiend. After a stern look, as if to indicate that he always kept his promises, the Sachem proceeded with his talk.

"'To make a watercourse such as I propose will be a very hard, long work, and it will be through other people's land. But even the most quarrelsome cannot object, for it will be taking water to a white man's land, while if it were leading water to Indian land it would be a crime, and promptly suppressed.' Here the Chief paused, and held a short, whispered confab with his daughter, and some of the old men. Then he waved his hand for silence, as the women-folk had begun to chatter among themselves.

"'I have given you, my people,' the Sachem proceeded, 'a short account of the evil times upon which our race have fallen, and you know it only too well! I have told you two white

men of our miserable plight, and I have partly explained to you, my people, the plan for a betterment of our miserable condition. It only remains for me to state the last and most important stipulation in my plan, which you, paleface from the North, must accept wholly or not at all. And it is this, and you must not forget that it is a *great honour*. You must marry my daughter, if she chooses you! Accept, or go your way in peace. No hand will molest you, and no heart of man or woman of my tribe will ever wish you ill. And now I have done.'

"On the instant Dawenda came forward, a little shyly, but perfectly self-possessed, and, taking my hand, stood by my side as quietly and calmly as though she had been my wife for a score of years.

"I felt at that moment, as I feel and *know now*, that a true woman's heart was laid at my feet, and although there was the gulf of centuries between her thoughts and my thoughts, and although I knew I was cutting the painter with all my past, yet I deliberately kissed the girl before them all, and said, with the good priest interpreting for me, of course:

"'Sachem, I accept your proposal with a grateful heart, and I promise to devote what

abilities I possess to the welfare of the tribe into which you have generously taken me. And I swear to be faithful and true to your beautiful daughter, Dawenda!'

"The Chief came forward, and, taking our hands in his, pronounced us man and wife. Then he said some words to the priest, who at once turned to Dawenda and me and proceeded quietly with the simple marriage service as is the fashion in the Far West. The ceremony was over in a few minutes, and Dawenda and I were proclaimed man and wife by redskin and paleface law. And so ended a momentous morning's business for us all, but especially momentous for Dawenda and me. And I am most thankful to say that I have never had cause to regret that morning's strange transformation of my position, and my outlook on the life of this world, and I may add, on the life of the World beyond."

Here the Professor paused a bit, with the far-away shadow in his eyes which people have when they turn their mind's eye on the vanished years. And then he quietly remarked:

"Few people know better than I that 'The thoughts of youth are long, long thoughts.' But I also know that my good, true wife has

been just the right one for me, and has saved me many times from the dreadful consequences of the whisky-demon's power. Whereas if I had been left in what is commonly termed 'civilized' parts, the only means that could have saved me from hell on earth, and hereafter, would have been an angel direct from Heaven, or what is synonymous with a heavenly visitant—the *Salvation Army*! That being the only organization I know of, which can say to mountains of sin and misery, 'Be thou removed, and be thou cast into the sea, and it shall be done.'

"The reason I fell into that terrible crime at Full-Moon City was the fact that Dawenda thought I had gone to Salt Lake, and it was not until she had ridden nearly two hundred miles in one day and a night that she learned I had gone the other way; then she made a more wonderful dash south and, as you know, saved me from the retribution of my sin and folly.

"My story is done. It only remains for me to say that I legally secured this tract of land, and the tribe worked hard and cheerfully at the water-lead, and in putting the land in shape for irrigation. Fortunately, surveying had been one of my few useful acquirements,

and luckily for us (but no doubt to the dire misfortune of some poor derelict who had been stranded and compelled to part with his fine theodolite for a mere trifle), I bought the beautiful instrument from the store-keeper for the sum of forty dollars, and found it a real Trouton and Sims instrument which must have cost the original owner somewhere about five hundred. Thus I had no difficulty in finding the levels quite accurately, greatly to the astonishment and admiration of the Indians.

"All my fraternal relationships with the tribe have remained perfectly harmonious. The one great conducive constituent which has been the actual cause of this wonderful harmony existing among us is the hard and fast law to which we all swore fealty on my dear old Greek Testament, more than twenty years agone.

"That law prohibits the introduction of fire-water into the village, in any shape or form whatever, under the penalty of death. And if a member of the tribe has been abroad and returns in any stage of inebriation, he is put into a very effective model of our ancient stocks (which I will show you by-and-by), and being deprived of all clothing, he is well bespattered with mud and filth and left in that deplorable condition,

not only until he is sober, but until he is profoundly penitent. There have only been two cases of such punishment in all these years. One man was so overwhelmed with shame that when released he fled to the river and drowned himself, the other took to his bed and died within a week.

"I have told you, and you have seen, my curse, but you cannot fully understand the *Nemesis* that has dogged my steps for more than thirty years of my life. Some men can be cured of the drink passion by long compulsory abstinence and some by the direct power of God. I will be cured by neither of these. I have been what the Indians call 'bitten by the mad wolf,' and there is no remedy for such save the grave. 'Men at some time are masters of their fates,' but for me that time has passed for ever.

"My dear, wise, little Indian squaw—with her true heart, and lynx eyes, and with God's help—has saved me time and time again. And I can only trust that she will be able to do so until I am safely over the *river*, and beyond the power of this devil's invention which has deceived and ruined men's bodies and souls ever since it befooled good, wise men, like Noah and

Lot. If I lose Dawenda you need never come back to 'Yellow Bluffs Ranch,' to look for me. Our people are good and true, but only a loving, wise woman's wit, by God's help, can circumvent the 'Mad wolf.'"

* * * * *

Our parting with the Professor was most pathetic, at least on his part and mine. Aaron had not heard the Professor's sad history and perhaps he would not have believed it if he had. Somehow Aaron was very incredulous of the ordinary squawman's yarns and he had failed to see that the Professor was not an ordinary, but altogether an extraordinary, squawman.

During our sojourn at "Yellow Bluffs Ranch," of course I saw much of Dawenda, and learned a great deal of the strange individuality of Indian character. Here was an unsophisticated child of the desert, who had lived in the most intimate of all human relationships, namely wifehood, with a man of high learning, tender sympathy, and of a most gentle disposition, and yet after more than twenty years' companionship and genuine *love*, Dawenda and the Professor were no nearer to each other, in the profound depths of their souls, than they were on the first day they met. No nearer, I suspect, than were

Cain and the pre-Adamite wife whom he found in the desert. But although, as the Professor expressed it, there was a gulf of centuries in thought between Dawenda and himself, yet I am certain that in his heart of hearts he knew full well that the merciful God had sent him the one patient human being who was pre-eminently adapted to save him from the *bite of the mad wolf*.

CHAPTER VII

"ONE TOUCH OF NATURE MAKES THE WHOLE WORLD KIN"

It was a long day's march from Yellow Bluffs to the proper ford of the San Juan. The south bank of the river was negotiable enough, but the north bank presented such a formidable barrier that it would have been impossible to effect a landing when we managed to cross the river. So we had to march many miles up stream to find a proper ford where the banks were low on both sides. It was after sun-down before we reached what we deemed was the usual ford, judging by the many tracks of cattle and horses

leading directly into the river. It was so late before we finally decided that we had struck the right ford, that we foolishly, as it turned out, concluded to camp, and cross next morning.

During the night there must have been a cloud-burst in the mountains, for next morning the river was considerably higher, and showing by its colour that it was sweeping over new earth instead of keeping within its usual bounds. And, what gave us most anxiety, it was bringing down much *débris* and, worst of all, bushes and great branches of trees, which we knew by experience were awkward things to come in contact with in a swift current.

As it was only for one night, we had camped on a low shingle spit near the water, to be ready to cross at the first streak of daylight. So soon as we could discern matters clearly, and had discovered the state of the river, we knew it behoved us to do one of two things: either to cross the river at once, ere the flood and wreckage became more dangerous; or else make a swift retreat to higher ground, before the San Juan spread into a raging sea sweeping over all the low sandbars and muddy hollows which extended for some miles south of us.

After a short consultation we both agreed

that the better course was to make a dash for the ford at once while the river was apparently still fordable. We packed our camp outfit on Aaron's bronco and the pack mule. By this time Aaron much preferred riding Diablo, who had now become the most exemplary of quadrupeds, and could do—as Aaron expressed it—"everything a white man could do, except tell lies." And the good little creature proved himself worthy of Aaron's high eulogium by a striking act of gallantry that morning.

In a few minutes we were mounted and off, I leading, and Aaron behind with the two pack animals following. When we reached middle stream the water was half up my saddle, and as my bronco was at least two hands higher than Diablo, I looked anxiously over my shoulder to see how Aaron was faring. At that moment a half submerged big branch of a tree struck the mule broadside on, catching Aaron and Diablo in its crooked arms and rolling rider and steed over and over in the muddy, swirling flood. I could render no help whatever, either to Aaron or Diablo. Indeed it was all I could do to struggle forward into shallow water myself. In a few minutes I was on safe, dry ground, in the midst of an excited group of

white men who were shouting and gesticulating, while the only words I could make out clearly were:

"Look, look! the cussed mule has got him by the neck like a rat, and the savage beast is going to drown him! No, by golly! the little critter is trying to save him—but the lariat is tangled in the branch—and they will both be lost."

At this I rushed among them, wild with horror at the prospect of my faithful comrade drowning before my eyes, and shouted at the top of my voice: "Five hundred dollars to the man who saves my friend!" But in a moment I was put in my proper place, and feeling very much ashamed of myself.

The man who seemed to be the leader of the gang turned upon me with a blaze of anger in his eyes, and a stern rebuke on his tongue. "Stranger, I guess you ain't bin in our parts long, or you would know that honest men out here don't make swops of their lives for dollars. Don't jaw any more!" And you may be sure I didn't say another word.

Then the same man called, without a moment's delay, "Here, all of you who call yourselves men, join hands and into the river quick. For we

must save them two critters, and not stand here yelling like a parcel of coyotes."

In a few moments clothes were discarded, and like a flash ten or a dozen great powerful men dashed into the river grasping each other's hands in the old highland fashion of fording a burn when in spate—a fashion which has astonished many a man besides the French king, who was so profoundly impressed by the gallantry of his "Scotch Brigade" which forded the river and captured the island, when all his troops had failed in the attempt.

I can reflect upon the event calmly enough now, though at the time I was half dazed by the suddenness of our catastrophe. But the quick gallant action of the men in dashing to the rescue of Aaron and Diablo soon restored me, and although at the moment I could do nothing physically towards saving them, I relieved my feelings by a wild shout of encouragement to the brave fellows who were gallantly dashing to the rescue. As I have said, I was too disjasket both in mind and body fully to understand the position at the first glance. But after a bit this is what I made out, and the men confirmed it afterwards in their accounts of the tragedy.

The great branch in which Aaron and Diablo were entangled had grounded on a mud bank, or other impediment at the bottom of the river, and had become stationary for the time being. The mule was head and neck above water, apparently supporting himself by hooking his fore-legs over some submerged part of the great conglomeration of twisted leaves and small branches adhering to the main trunk, which seemed to be not merely a branch—as I had at first supposed—but a great tree torn up by the roots holus-bolus.

At first I could not see Aaron at all until I made out clearly what had evoked the men's exclamations, before they took to the water. I saw distinctly that Diablo was holding Aaron's head above water by a firm grip of his teeth upon the collar of Aaron's tough buck-skin shirt. How or why the little creature knew what to do I cannot explain. I am merely telling you that which I saw, and what made rough men's eyes fill with tears when they had brought the man safely to shore, but in their laudable anxiety to save him had not been able to save gallant little Diablo—who was so twisted and involved in the tree, and no doubt so exhausted by his successful effort to save

Aaron, that when attention was turned to him after Aaron was brought to safety, it was found that the brave creature was beyond earthly help. And I may add that I feel certain that all of us white men sincerely tried that day to believe the Indian theology, which assigns a happy future to good animals, as well as to good men!

Aaron soon recovered from the cramp which had been the cause of his serious souse in the muddy waters of the San Juan. And as soon as he was able to stand, he actually attempted to plunge into the rushing river to go to the rescue of his faithful little steed. This, of course, the men would not allow him to do: but a couple of the generous fellows (while the others held Aaron, for he was sort of raving) dashed in with the ends of stout lariats in their hands, and in a few minutes the motionless body of him who had afforded me a vast amount of deep —if at times anxious—psychical study, was respectfully brought to shore, and laid, as I may say, reverently on the sloping bank near to Aaron, whom three men were getting into dry clothes, and at the same time administering small portions of bread moistened with whisky.

I had never supposed Aaron to be one of the

sort to be affected sentimentally. But I was surprised exceedingly to see this self-possessed, unemotional man of many hard experiences lay his hand on little Diablo's head and weep quite openly. And I must add that the rest of us standing around did pretty much the same thing. If there had been any disinterested spectators that day on the banks of the San Juan, it might have tickled their risibility to see a lot of ordinary rough men actually shedding tears over the body of a little dead mule! But had they been able to see a little deeper into the mystery of our hearts, and the hearts of our poor dumb relations, they might have learned something of the meaning of those wonderful words: "One touch of nature makes the whole world kin."

After a couple of hours' sleep in their tent—it turned out that we had fallen in with a party of gold prospectors—Aaron began to recover from the shock of being half drowned, and wholly broken up in his tenderest feelings. And when he had rested a bit longer, and had partaken of a hearty mid-day dinner, to which the kindly fellows invited us, he was once more his natural self, much to my relief and comfort.

When he had quietly asked my permission

to express his gratitude to our new-found friends for their timely and brave help in our late perilous plight, and also for their hospitality and sympathy, Aaron delivered the following neat little speech.

"Gentlemen, or if you will permit a rough man to say, friends! I want to thank you for the slick way you fetched me out o' that fix! I ain't one o' the talkin' sort, but I ain't a forgettin' man! Now I'm goin' to ask you for another kindness. And it is to help me bury in a Christian way my true, good little mule, who lost his life saving mine!"

Aaron got no further—even if he intended to say more—for the company rose as one man, and, quietly taking their shovels and picks, marched out.

"Where shall we dig, Stranger?" said the apparent leader to Aaron, as we all collected around little Diablo.

There was a huge boulder lying some fifty or sixty yards from the river. It was the only stone thereabouts, and must have been carried there by some great flood, or other convulsion of nature. In front of this stone Aaron selected a spot as being suitable for Diablo's resting place.

In a very short time six pairs of stalwart arms made a grave deep enough and wide enough to afford Diablo a most respectable tomb. The work was done in absolute and respectful silence; indeed that funeral was conducted in such a quiet, orderly manner that it might have been a useful lesson to some of those who consider themselves perfect in such sad matters. When the grave was completed, we all went over to where Diablo was lying. I had been puzzling my mind with the problem of how the body was to be conveyed to the grave otherwise than by dragging it along the ground, which method I felt certain would be opposed by Aaron. And I had much anxiety lest the amicable intercourse of the morning might be changed to foolish misunderstanding, and anger. But again I was reminded—as I had been many a score of times in my life—"Never cross a bridge until you come to it." That which had given me anxiety was all done with a celerity and decorum that excite my wonder and admiration to this day!

With their sharp axes and clever hands the men had a pine felled, and some nice top branches lopped off before I guessed their plans. Laying the thick bunches of the tops over each other

until they deemed that the arrangement was solid enough not only to afford a very respectable, but also quite a comfortable, conveyance, they passed two or three double lariats round the forward ends of the pine tops for the twofold purpose of holding them securely together, and as a means of dragging the quickly improvised sylvan sledge. When all was completed, the men quietly lifted Diablo thereon—a pretty heavy lift by the way—for the creature was hefty though small. Then they took hold of the lariats, and without a word—and much to my admiration of their whole conduct—brought the little mule to his permanent corral, slowly, respectfully, and without the slightest bustle or noise of any sort. When they reached the grave-side, three lariats were slid under the pine tops, and Diablo was lowered, sled and all, safely and respectfully into his ample resting place. The men then, without trouble or jerking, pulled up their lariats and stood quite still, apparently awaiting Aaron's further wishes. I remember that at that moment the whimsical thought flashed into my mind that Diablo was my property, and that it was I, not my serving man, who should be consulted! But I was quickly corrected in the midst of my impious

vanity, and thrown into a state of utter bewilderment, by Aaron falling on his knees, and saying in his usual quiet, undemonstrative way:

"My dear Lord! You hev seen right to make Diablo save my checks this time: and You hev seen right to call his checks in: and I'm mighty thankful! But I'm very low down for the loss of my mule; but *You* know best. And if it is true what the Injins say about the Happy Huntin' Grounds, I hope that I shall meet Diablo when *You* see fit to call me. Amen!"

While Aaron uttered his strange prayer and hope, the rest of us stood with our hats off, and when he concluded, and had made a slight signal to the men, little Diablo was quietly and comfortably covered up. Then we all returned to "the story of our lives from year to year."

I have crossed the San Juan at least a dozen times since that memorable crossing with my friend Aaron Slocum and good little Diablo. And, strange to say, I always awake with calm, happy feelings, and with peace and hope in my soul!

* * * * *

More than ten years have passed since these adventures in the "wild and woolly West," and Time, with his restless hands, has wrought

many changes, as is his ceaseless habit. The Professor has passed to a more perfect rest than even that afforded by his Greek Testament and the quietude of Yellow Bluffs. For years I regularly had a letter from him, always written on New Year's Day, and invariably reporting good health of all at the Ranch, and his own perfect contentment with his mode of life.

I enjoyed the Professor's letters exceedingly, with their quaint bits of wisdom, and anecdote, and always beautiful phraseology. But one year they ceased—as all things cease in this world, excepting sin and sorrow—and after I had written twice without any reply, I received the following letter from Dawenda. The address, fortunately, was quite correct, as she had copied that from the Professor's note book: the composition was evidently entirely her own, and I thought it remarkably good.

"Deer Frind.

"Yous 2 leter kum my hand. I thank you for yous good words. My deer Professor hee die away won yeer gon. I am alon after 30 happy yeer! I bury him under tree at door where hee and you sit and tauk. I burn fire many night for hee see trail. Sum times hee

kum when I sleep, and kiss! then me great happy for many days.

"All gon now, father, mother, Père Conrad. I wish mucho me gon too. if you kum I give you all his books and papers. that is all.

"DAWENDA.

"PS. I no writ good, mor beter you kum tauk."

I shall certainly make another pilgrimage out to the far West to see my friend Dawenda. And I know that the Professor's papers will afford some fine philosophical, instructive, and deeply interesting reading.

THE QUEST OF THE *SEAHAWK*

THE QUEST OF THE *SEA-HAWK*

PRELUDE

It was in the Gulf of Dulcé, in the Port of Yzabel,
Ah, Lord, how the moonlight glistened, and the long sharp shadows fell!
How the ocean danced and shimmered, like a sea of molten gold,
How the trailers swung, and blossoms hung, can ne'er be sung or told.

'Twas the little schooner *Seahawk* came a-creeping round the head,
With her long low hull and raking spars, and snowy wings outspread;
Came a-creeping through the moonlight (as the heavy tropic breath
Half filled her sails with balmy gales) as silently as death.

We mounted one long carronade on the saucy little craft—
A heavy gun for such a one—with a fourteen pounder aft;
The carronade for chasing, and the little taffrail-gun
For a shot when men had done their best, but had to cut and run.

Ah! the merry days in Dulcé, moored among the fairy keys,
Or slipping like a sea-gull o'er the wondrous coral seas,
Over gardens spread beneath us, fit for fairy king and queen,
Where coral glanced, and seaweed danced, and fishes slid between!

CHAPTER I

IN my wanderings, I once passed a winter in Jamaica, and a very happy and interesting time I had in that beautiful and fertile island.

I took up my abode, and a really comfortable abode it was, at the house of a kindly lady—you must always say *lady* in Jamaica if there is a vestige of colour—situated on the Gordon Town road.

I made some very pleasant acquaintances—or should I say friendships?—during that most genial summer-winter. One was Mr. (now Sir) D. Morris, at that time curator of the government gardens. Another was a most congenial doctor in charge of the hospital at Spanish Town, I have forgotten his name, but I have by no means forgotten his kindness and urbanity. I cherish some other memories which I would

be loth to part with, and among these there is one—a memory I shall never forget until I also shall pass to the Land of Silence.

The friend I refer to—Captain James Gordon—was, as you will infer from his name, a Scotchman by birth, but a citizen of the world by habit and the decree of fate. He was, or rather had been (for he was, when I knew him, a bit past very active service), one of those adventurous spirits who have carried the old Flag into all corners of the world, at the cost of much toil and suffering, and with dauntless resolution. But those days were past for James Gordon, as they slide past for us all, whether we are dauntless or otherwise. I am now referring to a time some years ago, and Gordon was then "a bit over three score and ten," as he freely admitted himself.

Since my friend had given up sea-life he had spent his time mostly in Jamaica. He told me that he had been so long absent from his native land that he had practically lost touch with the old life; and all those who had been near and dear to him had either wandered and lost touch with the Glens and the Heather, as he himself had done, or had passed to the great majority.

Under these circumstances Gordon had finally

made up his mind to pass his last "dog-watch" in a climate which suited his much-calmed-down-circulation, and among a people to whose startling varieties of colour and habits of life he had become accustomed through long usage.

My old friend had managed to secure a competence which quite relieved him of financial anxiety for the future, and afforded him the additional satisfaction of being able to lend a hand to an old shipmate here and there, who had been less fortunate on the voyage of life than he.

The climate and his mode of life had evidently suited Gordon's constitution, for when I consorted with him he was as active, and could stand as much fatigue, as men twenty-five or even thirty years younger than himself. He was a delightful companion, always cheerful and with an endless store of reminiscences reaching back scores of years. Some strange and weird, some sad and romantic, and all told with the charm of simplicity and truth.

Gordon had come to the West Indies when he was some twenty years of age or thereabout, so had seen many changes in the Islands. He had seen slavery flourishing, had known the best and the worst of that curious system which

has come down the ages from the beginning, but which seems at last to be abolished for ever. But *quien sabe?* the world is not perfect by any means yet, nor is it yet at the end.

The lad made his *début* in Kingston on the Glasgow barque *Clyde*, sent out with a general cargo for the island, and to load sugar home. Those were not the days of hurry—*mañana*, and *no importancia* were the fashion with regard to time. And, as my friend often remarked, everybody looked happier, more placid and contented in those slow old-fashioned times than in these days of mad haste and worry. Men had learned that "He that hasteth with his feet sinneth." Gordon declared that even the slaves took life more leisurely than free men take it nowadays. And if they did skip now and then at the crack of the whip, it was more in fun than earnest.

Of course the tropics cast their glamour over the lad, and either for his good or ill—as you may look at the matter—he made up his foolish young mind to give the barque "leg-bail." And so began a life of much adventure; the old habits and fashions slipping away, like water off a duck's back—as Gordon said himself—and new things and thoughts taking their places.

Before bidding the barque *adios*, the boy was wise enough to arrange for his escape properly. He was clever enough to know that he must get clear of the land altogether, at least for a time. He knew that if he tried to hide anywhere on the island a few dollars to the negroes would serve to bring the runaway back to justice in double-quick time. Even without the dollar bribe, the negroes generally captured a runaway sailor, simply for the exquisite delight of seeing a white fellow getting a rope's ending.

But my friend, even in his unfledged days, was too shrewd to risk an attempt by land, and cast about for some safer method of escape.

Gordon, as well as other members of the barque's crew, had been much impressed by the beautiful lines and general appearance of a schooner which lay ready for sea near the entrance of the harbour. She was a long, low, raking craft, about ninety or a hundred tons burden, a fore-and-after, and only carrying a square-sail in light winds, or if in some extra hurry.

It seemed to Gordon's romantic young mind that it would be a splendid change to serve on such a beautiful craft and be clear of the old, clumsy, sugary-smelling barque, which had often

given him woeful qualms while working in her hot, close, evil-scented hold.

* * * * *

With these few disjointed words by way of introduction, I shall now record one of the many reminiscences with which my friend often beguiled a long tropical night into the space of a few hours.

Captain Gordon, like most old seamen, was gifted with a tenacious memory; a gift, I think, much more frequently found among seamen than landsmen. I suppose this invaluable quality is fostered by their lonely and contemplative life, while shore-folk have their memories and other good gifts (with which they may have begun the journey) knocked all to pieces by the constant rush and turmoil of passing events.

CHAPTER II

"It is quite fifty years," said Gordon, "since one calm night I bribed with a silver dollar a ragged, black rascal to slide me alongside the schooner *Seahawk*, in his leaky old fish-smelling dinghy. I had arranged with the fellow before-

hand to do the job on the foregoing terms, and furthermore I had promised him an additional dollar when I returned to Kingston if he kept absolutely silent regarding my disappearance and mode of escape. This precaution was quite necessary in Kingston (and many another port) as poor foolish seamen find to their cost. Whenever the 'wharf-rats' get all they possibly can out of a sailor for helping him to desert, they at once proceed to sell their information to whomsoever will pay most for the fool's capture.

"Of course I had foregathered with the schooner's crew on various occasions both on the barque and on their own pretty craft. I had even got the length of touching my cap to Captain Hugh Murray, their commander, and, most important of all, I had made fast friendship with a lad of my own age, Bob Douglas by name.

"The schooner's crew were an exceptionally fine lot of men, such as are rarely found on a small craft trading among the islands and on the Central American coast. Another thing which struck me, even inexperienced as I then was, and with a very limited knowledge of such things, was the large number of men which the *Seahawk* carried. A fore-and-after does not

require half as large a crew as a square-rigged vessel, and I was surprised to find twenty men before the mast, with the captain, first, second, and third mates aft, besides the boatswain, cook, and steward in their quarters.

"Whenever I visited the *Seahawk*—which the good old skipper of the barque allowed me to do occasionally of a Sunday afternoon—I was astonished and pleased to see the clean, orderly, spick-and-span state of everything alow and aloft. And another thing which puzzled me was the fact that although the schooner was ready for sea, as the men told me, there was nothing to be seen in the shape of cargo, on deck or below.

"The schooner was modelled on the lines of the old Baltimore clippers, and was the fastest craft I ever set foot on or ever came across on the high seas. She was half as long again as the general run of crafts of her size. She had great beam, did not draw much water, and with her clean run and hollow floor she could reel off fifteen knots an hour either on a bowline or running free with a stiff breeze. The beautiful little craft did not waste time—as so many small crafts do—jumping and plunging about, her great length enabling her to take two or

three jabbly seas at a time without the least inconvenience, and with her great beam she could stand up to half a gale with all sail set.

"When I got alongside the *Seahawk*, on the night I so unceremoniously changed ships, I gave the nigger his dollar, and slipped quietly over the rail with my canvas bag which held all my slim worldly possessions, and, according to pre-arranged agreement, met my friend Bob Douglas waiting for me. With bare feet we made our noiseless way to the fo'c'sle and then Bob told me to get into his bunk, and make myself as small as possible, while he stowed my kit in his locker.

"That was the beginning of my career on the little craft which was destined to be my home for many a long year until a fierce Norther laid her to her final rest alongside of many a companion, high-and-dry on the wreck-strewn beach of Vera Cruz, at the head of the Mexican Gulf.

"But I am getting far ahead of my story, and as dear old Captain Cuttle advised, 'I must overhaul my catechism,' and so proceed with the main points of my history; and although you may think it romantic history, it is by no means romantic fiction.

"When the moon rose on the night when I shipped so quietly in my new service, the anchor was tripped, and even with small sail set, the schooner made such good use of the light trade-wind that by daylight the highest peaks of Jamaica were almost invisible. Our position I learned as I popped my head up the fo'c'sle companion-way and cautiously peered about.

"While I stood there, half up the fo'c'sle ladder, enjoying the deliciously cool breeze on my bare head, face, and neck, I was almost knocked into a fit by being roughly seized by the scruff of the neck, dragged on deck, and laid on my back with my whilom friend Bob Douglas holding me down. I was a pretty active athletic lad in those days, and in a moment I had Bob under me, and was proceeding to administer further correction when he grabbed my hair, pulled my ear down to his mouth, and hissed in a vehement whisper:

"'I am only pretending, you fool! If the captain knows the truth he will flog us both. Keep on pretending that we are fighting, but don't hurt me.'

"In a moment the sailors were around us in a bunch, and although they were enjoying our rumpus down to the ground—this I learned

after it was all over—they only looked amazed and dumbfounded at seeing a strange boy trying to strangle their well-beloved shipmate Bob Douglas.

"Many strong hands promptly dragged me off poor Bob who, springing to his feet, shook his fist in my face, saying in a loud voice so that the officer of the watch could hear:

"'By and by I will square accounts with you, my smart little covey. In the meantime come along aft and report yourself for a lesson by the cat! And then explain how in thunder you got on board our ship.'

"By this time the second mate had appeared on the scene, and everybody dropped into an embarrassed sort of silence as the officer demanded what all the row was about. At first he did not notice me, as I was bunched up among the crowd of sailors. But as Bob and some others moved out, his eye caught sight of my scared face, and stepping close to me he demanded "Who the blazes are you? and where have you come from?"

"Then my friend Bob Douglas thinking, I suppose, that things had better be explained a bit, took off his cap as though he were at a court martial—which in a manner he was, as he and

I had been at war—and proceeded to give his version of the affair.

"'Please sir,' began Bob, 'it was so jolly hot that I slept on deck last night during my watch below, and I didn't go into the fo'c'sle until a little while ago, and when I went to my locker for a towel, lo, and behold! I found this fine cove in my bunk, quite at his ease, and snoring away as if the whole fo'c'sle belonged to himself and he was the Prince of Wales taking a sea voyage for the good of his health. Of course I got a bit riled and took hold of the cove's leg to haul him out of my premises, when the beggar gave me an awful kick in the bread-basket, and I fell into such pain and fear that I rushed on deck calling to the men that the devil had gotten into the fo'c'sle! Then Billy Morrison and some of the others came along, and when they got to the companion-way, here was my gentleman standing at the top step, cooling off and enjoying the scenery, and just having a look to see that the ship and all hands were in good order and according to his highness's wishes. This was too much even for humble me, and I got hold of his woolly nob, just to let him know that there were other people on board besides his royal self. But in a moment he jumped on

me, and I am sure he would have killed me if Bill and the others had not hauled the savage young beast off!'

"Here Bob began to whimper and rub the part of his body which he said I had kicked, and he acted the whole thing so well that I had great difficulty in suppressing a burst of laughter. But the second mate relieved the situation by sternly commanding Bob to 'belay his slack jaw,' and ordering us both aft.

"Then I knew that the crucial moment of my escapade had arrived, fraught with consequences which I could in no wise guess at, but which I feared might be something dreadful. However, I made up my mind, in the short space of time before I was brought face to face with Captain Murray, that I would tell the absolute truth of the whole case, as far as possible, without involving my friend Bob Douglas. I was bound in common decency to shield Bob, for he had risked much—besides his veracity—for me.

"The *Seahawk* had a raised quarter-deck, not what could be called a poop, as it was only only about three feet above the main deck, but the additional height afforded fine light and air to the cabin. As our procession marched aft, the captain was leaning on the lee rail with

folded arms, looking at the sparkling sea, and quietly smoking a cigar. When we reached the break of the quarter-deck, the officer signed for us to stand there, and he alone went aft to Captain Murray. What he said I don't know, but he was not long about it, for in a minute or two he signalled to us to come aft. I don't know how the others felt or looked, but as for myself I know that I both looked and felt pretty sheepish and miserable at that moment.

"Captain Murray in those days was a handsome, fine-looking man, still with the glamour and signs of youth about him even although he was a good bit past that reckless period of life. When one looked at him one had the feeling that he was good, brave, and true. The sort of man that women and children would trust, and men, too, if they were honest, but from whom they would slink away if they were crooked in their morals. So, as I looked in the captain's face, I felt a perceptible rise in my foolish young heart's barometer, which had dropped to zero at my unexpectedly boisterous reception that morning.

"When the officer had stated the facts of the case, as far as he knew them, he stood aside, and left Bob Douglas and me exposed to full

view, and I know we made a very sorry view indeed.

"The captain looked us all over with those wonderful eyes of his, which were evidently suited to see through a bulk-head, let alone a couple of silly lads with deception written all over them. After a long, and to us painful, pause, he threw his cigar over the rail, and said to me in a quiet, slow, and strangely soft voice for a sailor man, even one of the quarter-deck sort:

"'Young man, where did you come from? and how did you get on board my ship? and who helped you? and, lastly, for what reason did you come?'

"I knew at that moment, as I knew after we had been shipmates for over twenty years, that any attempt at prevarication would be utterly useless with Captain Murray, for I felt perfectly certain that he would read the truth through the cleverest devised fiction which I could manufacture. But I am glad to say that I had honour enough left in my soul to determine in that supreme moment not to involve Bob Douglas as an abettor in my crime.

"Thereupon I made a clean breast of it all. How I had grown sick of the old sugar barque *Clyde*, and fallen in love with the beautiful

schooner *Seahawk*, had engaged a black boy to put me alongside quietly at midnight, and had crawled into the first bunk I had found in the fo'c'sle, etc.

"'And how did my men use you?' inquired the captain, in a tone as if he were anxious to hear that his men had treated me kindly.

"'Oh, they did not treat me at all, sir! Perhaps they waited to know what you would order to be done with me. Only I am afraid I hurt this young man,' pointing at Bob, 'as I was hastily getting out of bunk a little while ago, and if I did I am very sorry, and beg his pardon.'

"Like a wise commander, Captain Murray did not wish to go deeper than necessary into a matter which might involve the discipline of other members of the crew. At least, that was what came into my shrewd young mind at the time, for he made no further inquiry regarding my advent on the schooner.

"'What is your name?' was the next sharp, clear question.

"'James Gordon, sir.'

"'Very well. Then I must tell you, James Gordon, that it is always a disgraceful, not to say dishonest, action for a man to desert from a

ship on which he has shipped and promised to serve faithfully for a certain time. Through your desertion the *Clyde* is now one man short-handed, and maybe more, if others have followed your ill example. I have no means at present of remedying your fault, but if by any chance I find it possible to put you back to your rightful ship, you may rest assured I will do so. In the meantime I will place you in my own watch, and I hope your future conduct on my ship will be an improvement on the beginning.'

"I felt very thankful, and very small, at that moment. Firstly, because I had fully expected some punishment more or less severe from this clear-sighted and clear-headed man, and secondly, because I felt with a stinging consciousness that I cut a very sorry figure morally and physically. Of course, the second mate and Bob Douglas heard every word the captain said, and, I had no doubt, enjoyed the whole scene. This knowledge added considerably to my boyish chagrin, while my anxiety of mind regarding my present position and future prospects, and my sincere shame for breaking my pledged agreement with the captain of the *Clyde*, put my callow young soul into a most unenviable state of perturbation.

"After a little pause, as if he were considering something, the captain turned to the mate, saying:

"'Mr. Waters, you will please put this young man—James Gordon—in my watch. I am a man short since Adams went home on leave. You will allow Gordon such things from the slop-chest as you may think absolutely necessary. Now, pipe all hands to quarters.'

CHAPTER III

"THAT was the beginning of my adventures in the South, and my sailing on Captain Murray's wonderful craft—Government despatch-boat, whilom privateer, and what-not, but always splendidly beautiful schooner *Seahawk*.

"I was soon very comfortably ensconced (in spite of my preliminary fears) in my new quarters, with a nice bunk and locker all to myself, and with a man whom I judged to be one of the steady old hands in the bunk under mine. William Morrison—as the unmistakable lettering on his huge sea-chest informed me—was one of the quiet, sober sort of old seamen, never wasting a word unnecessarily, although other-

wise a most cheerful and obliging companion, as I will have occasion to mention later on. Besides this, he was also in the captain's watch, so we were often brought together, not only in our watch below, but in our duties on deck, and I know that his companionship and mature advice was much to my advantage morally and physically.

"As I say, matters soon dropped into the usual round of sea life, and in the course of a few days I felt quite at home on board the *Seahawk*. I did not trouble my brain with much thinking in those days, but I have often thought in the course of my life since then of the ready adaptability of the ordinary human being to his environment, and what a curious and merciful characteristic it is. Even in such a hard case as poor Robinson Crusoe, Defoe tells the story absolutely naturally and truly when he depicts the lonely, desperate, hopeless man, pulling himself together, adapting himself to his miserable circumstances, and in a short time leading a comparatively contented life under conditions which he at first contemplated with horror and despair.

"As bearing upon this subject I will relate in a few words a case which came under my own

personal observation, and which touched me very deeply at the time, and which I have never forgotten.

"I once picked up a man who had been marooned on one of the loneliest Eastern islets of the Gambier group. The spot was merely a hump of sand with a patch of vegetation on top, and the breakers threatening to wash away the whole concern every storm that blew. In some bygone time a ship must have been wrecked on the sand-dune, for her remains were still there, and the hull had, I suppose, been the foundation of the hump of sand and bits of vegetation. Here the poor man had cleverly excavated a space some ten feet square, and sheltered by the wreck had managed to keep himself warm at night lying on the dry sand. In this fashion he had lived for three years, and that not in utter misery, as his good physical condition proved when I rescued him.

"When his crew mutinied and put him ashore they were merciful enough, rogues though they were, to leave him some useful odds and ends —some fishing tackle, a flint and steel, an axe and spade, some extra clothing, a cask of water, and an old sail to rig up to catch rain-water to replenish his cask. They were also kind

enough to leave some kegs of provisions, but so scant a supply that even with the greatest care all were exhausted in a few months, and thereafter he had to depend wholly upon his own resources.

"But even under these desolate conditions, I found this man not only alive but in good health, and making the best of his untoward circumstances, and actually leaving his sand-burrow and awful solitude with symptoms of regret, not to say affection.

"The poor fellow (John Benn, by name) excited my sympathy and curiosity very deeply. And as he was with me for two or three months before I found an easy billet for him on an English ship bound for London, whither he wished to go to hunt up his father and mother, who, no doubt, had long given up their son as dead, I had many talks with him regarding his mode of life and his mental condition during his utterly companionless life on the lonely sand-dune. When he fully realized that he was deserted on one of the loneliest spots in a lonely sea, he fell into a state of madness, raved and cursed, and almost determined to end his miserable existence by his own hand. Then at the close of that first awful day of hopeless

solitude, and when the stars and planets—which he had long known by name in his navigation work—began to appear, there came into his heart a feeling that somehow he was not quite deserted, for he could look at those changeless directors who had never deceived him by a hair's breadth, east, west, north, or south! And the knowledge of their absolute trueness comforted his soul like the voices of loving friends.

"Strange to say, never after that first terrible day did the poor lonely man fall into utter despair. Not that he comforted himself with hopes of escape, for he seemed to abandon all thought of rescue, and diligently devoted himself to certain daily tasks which he planned and carried out methodically and strictly. First, of a morning, he made his bedroom, as he called his sand-burrow, comfortable for night. Then he would see that part of his old sail was in good position for catching any showers which might drift along, and leading the precious drops into the water cask. After his frugal breakfast there was the ceaseless task of angling both for fish and sea-birds, and he told me of many curious expedients which he invented for catching and curing them. He also discovered that the tubers on the roots of the vine which clambered over

his sandy domain were edible, and quite palatable when cooked. This merciful discovery no doubt saved the man's life, as he could hardly have existed upon the bird and fish diet alone.

"But I have not time to tell you all, or I should rather say half, of the poor fellow's many expedients, or I would get too far away from my main subject, 'The Quest of the *Seahawk*.' However, I must mention, as briefly as I can, what interested me most of all, namely, how he got on with his own inner self, his soul, his mind, during those terrible years of bookless, speechless, *humanless* solitude.

"For many weeks after his first terrible despair, he told me, he did not hold any communion with his Maker, or even with his own soul! His mind seemed to fall into a state of blank chaos, and he somehow lost knowledge of himself, and would sit by the hour trying to recall his past life, even his very name slipped beyond his reach. He ate his portion of food, drank his portion of water, and slept his usual portions of sleep, and went mechanically about the business of catching fish or birds, or doing anything else, quite correctly but always in silence, and with the curious feeling that he was some one else, and not himself at all!

"One night as he lay in his burrow, speech suddenly burst from his lips without intention or premeditation, and strangely enough in words which he had committed to memory at the instance of his Sunday school teacher—some twenty-five or more years before—but which he did not remember having repeated since that long past date, and these were the words that came quite freely from his lips:

"'I call to remembrance my song in the night: I commune with mine own heart; and my spirit made diligent search.'

"Poor Benn told me that a great rush of tenderness and gratitude filled his heart as he repeated the text over; not only for the cheering words, but also, and even more, that he had found speech, and so communion with his own soul, and with God. He said he never before fully realized what must have been the joy and thankfulness of the dumb youth whom our Lord healed.

"From that day onward he never again suffered such utterly depressed loneliness as before. He had found a companion in his own soul, and thereafter they two held consultations, and made their plans in plain verbal talks, like good, loving, trusted shipmates. And he assured me

that he never forgot in his daily prayers to thank God for restoring this auricular commune, and after that night always presented his petitions in the *plural* number.

"Now, you may at once conclude that the man had lost his reason, and perhaps he had, but if so he had certainly found a very suitable and comforting sort of reason for his desperate case. He declared most solemnly that from the day—or I should say night—'when he communed with his own heart' and had speech with his own soul he felt at peace with God and man, and never again fell into the horror of desolate loneliness which had driven him to the verge of suicide several times.

"I sometimes wish that those learned gentlemen 'that live at home at ease,' and talk so glibly of psychologic mysteries, could go through some such experience as John Benn went through on his lonely domain. If they did I have no doubt they would be able to give us some profound enlightenment anent those subjects we all crave so futilely to know more about. Or maybe they would become like the little child whom Christ 'set in the midst'; and that would be much the best way of all!

CHAPTER IV

"But to return to my own adventure on the *Seahawk*," said my friend Gordon. "I soon fell into the habits of my new life—as poor Jack Benn fell into his—and I took up with zest the routine of my new duties.

"Instead of leaving the watch altogether or nearly so, to the second mate, as many masters do, I found that Captain Murray stood most of the watches himself. In this way I was brought much more into personal contact with him at the very beginning of the voyage, than I would have been had he left the watch altogether to the second mate. The captain was not a man given to many words, but whatever he said was to the point, and always spoken in that clear pleasant tone which makes it a pleasure rather than a task for a sailor to give instant obedience to an officer's command.

"Many a night as the schooner slipped along before the light trade-wind, the captain would ask me questions about my reasons for going to sea, and quietly advise me to return to a steady shore life, to the friends I loved and who loved

me. And I have not the least doubt, that if I could possibly have had the opportunity of walking into the beautiful old home immediately after one of those good, wise talks, my life would have been passed among mine own kindred, upon the good solid earth, in the old land, instead of upon the unstable, though bewitching, world of waters.

"The crew did not seem to know, nor yet to care, whither we were bound. But I learned from some concise bits of information dropped at odd times by my chum, old Bill Morrison, that we were bound for a port in Guatemala, charged with some secret mission from the British Government to that turbulent little state.

"The discipline and work on the *Seahawk* were very different from what I had been accustomed to on the old barque *Clyde*. Not only was everything in general good order, but every bit of the ship was spotlessly clean and neat. Every morning there was drill of one kind or another, with or without arms, taking in and setting sail, putting out the boat and picking up something which represented a man overboard, etc.

"Besides a heavy stand of arms arranged in

the cabin, the schooner mounted two guns, one a rather heavy piece for a small craft, and the other a beautiful little brass cannon of only short range, but very handy and effective at close quarters. At the time when I so unceremoniously joined the *Seahawk*, these pieces were unmounted and stowed away in the hold, but one day as we approached the coast they were hoisted on deck, and put into position ready for friendly salute or serious business.

"So in due time we approached the Central-American coast, and a very beautiful coast most of it is, all along from Panama, almost up to Vera Cruz in the Gulf of Mexico. In some parts the sea is so transparent that the ocean bed is as clearly visible at five or six fathoms deep as a place at that distance would be in the open air. And when the schooner happened to be lying becalmed, or slowly and steadily slipping along through the water so quietly that the glassy surface of the sea was undisturbed by splash or ripple, it was an entrancing occupation for a green-horn like myself, during any spare time, to get ensconced in some favourable position, and gaze with wonder and delight upon the various forms and splendid colours of rocks, corals, waving marine vegetation, and

strange, beautiful living creatures flashing their dazzling hues hither and thither.

"When I first saw these glories of the tropic seas, I marvelled how the men could coolly go about their usual tasks, hardly ever looking over the ship's side, or taking the least notice of the gorgeous splendours that overwhelmed me with amazement and delight. I was too young and inexperienced in those happy days to know the meaning of that old proverb, 'familiarity breeds contempt." But I have learned many deplorable and sad things since those old days, and the above miserable proverb is one of them.

"We crept up the coast cautiously, slowly feeling our way, for there were few charts of any reliability of the Central American coasts in those days. Every navigator had to depend upon keeping a bright look-out. However, I soon learned that Captain Murray had been on that wonderful coast many times, and knew his way about perfectly.

"At length we crossed the bar of Golfete, with barely enough water to carry the schooner over, and came to an anchor in as snug a little cove as one could wish.

"We were soon boarded by the Customs

official in an old ramshackle boat, manned by a tatterdemalion crew, all as merry as sandboys, and chattering like magpies. With a few formalities, the principal of which was drinking several glasses of our captain's wine, and passing a bottle down to his boatmen, much to their delight and hilarity, El Capitan del Puerto admitted us to pratique, and all the freedom of the port, although I doubt if he had the slightest notion what was the business which brought us to his free-and-easy country. Like all Dagos[1] he considered business a disagreeable necessity which had to be attended to sometimes, but was to be avoided whenever possible as *no importancia*!

CHAPTER V

"When the affable Capitan del Puerto had taken his departure, Captain Murray ordered out the gig with a full crew—four oarsmen and a helmsman. Bob Douglas and I with two others were the rowers, and steady old William Morrison was coxswain. It barely took five

[1] A common name with sailors for all Spanish South Americans.

minutes to have the boat out, and the captain was ready in an instant and called 'Shove off,' and away we went upon what seemed to me a splendid pleasure jaunt, but it turned out to be sad tragedy before the end.

"It was somewhat over six miles to the landing, but with a splendid light boat, and four stout rowers, we covered the distance in less than an hour. We landed on an open sandy beach a mile or two below Yzabel, which was in those days a long straggling town of adobe cottages with nicer looking houses in favourable positions, surrounded by beautiful gardens. The cathedral—a spacious name for what was simply a humble little church—stood on the slope of the foot-hills which rose into great mountain peaks that were lost in clouds and the misty vapours drifting from Guatemala's numerous volcanoes.

"When we landed the captain told Morrison and me to go with him up to the village, and the other three men to keep the boat, and he added the warning, 'See that none of you leave the boat for an instant; this is rather a dangerous place.'

"We proved the truth of that assertion before long; but at the moment I gave little heed to

the captain's warning, and went carelessly and happily into the queer old higgledy-piggledy Dago town, trudging alongside of Bill Morrison and staring hither and thither at anything that attracted my attention, as though battle and murder and sudden death were not the daily excitements of a Dago's life.

"It was a bright sunny day, and the narrow streets were crowded with men, women, children, donkeys, fowls, pigs, dogs, cats, parrots, etc., every one of them giving vent to their respective feelings, in their own natural lingo. It was a bit confusing, but what impressed me most was the infinite good nature of all hands. Not a burro kicked, not a woman screamed at another, excepting in mirth, not a man or woman growled or swore—if they did it was the mildest swearing I ever heard—in fact it seemed as if it were a day of some great rejoicing, instead of (as I learned many a time afterwards) the Dago's usual mode of taking life.

"Captain Murray walked steadily on ahead, while Morrison and I kept close in his rear. As we went along, steering carefully through the crowds, we did not seem to excite much attention. If some happened to catch our eye

they merely whispered 'Forasteros!' stared at us a moment, and turned again to their business, or gossip, or whatever was on their minds, or hands.

"Near the top of the village street—or rather road, for it was innocent of macadam—the crowd became thinner, and the houses improved in size and general appearance. After looking about a bit, as if to make sure of his position, the captain turned sharply into a spacious courtyard, 'patio,' as the Spaniards call such a place. It was a charming shady spot, with a little fountain playing in the centre, which watered some banana trees and several gorgeously blossoming hibiscus shrubs. The house was arranged four-square around this courtyard, and a very beautiful and comfortable abode it seemed to be.

"The cool fountain, the beautiful crimson flowers of the hibiscus, with the calm and silence of the place, formed such a delightful contrast to the glare and noise of the street, that I could not resist giving expression to my feelings of satisfaction and pleasure in some boyish exclamation of admiration, a little too expressive for exactly good manners, I am afraid. However that may have been, my ebullition did not

seem to disturb any one excepting a little dog, which instantly set about giving expression to his feelings in a series of sharp protests at being disturbed. This in turn aroused two ladies who had evidently been taking their noonday *siesta* in hammocks slung in the ample shade of the broad veranda.

"One lady sat up in her hammock and stared at us with a careless, inquiring sort of look, as if she were not too well pleased at being disturbed. The other sprang out of her unsteady couch (a hammock is an awkward thing for the uninitiated to enter or leave safely, as every sailor boy has found to his cost) in the smartest and most graceful manner I ever saw the performance accomplished! As she stood before us in her long, loose, flowing garment, with her splendid black hair falling around her perfectly beautiful face, I thought her, and I think of her yet as, the most lovely creature I ever beheld.

"The lady stood stock-still, looking Captain Murray straight in the eyes and, as she did so, a faint flush came into her face and a wonderful light gleamed in her great black eyes, and then to my utter consternation she said the one word, 'Hugh!' Surely there was not much to startle me in that word! And I had almost

forgotten that it was our captain's Christian name; but whatever was the cause I know that the lady's voice thrilled my foolish young soul as never before did human voice, or music, or mortal sound.

"In a moment Captain Murray caught her in his arms and kissed her, then, still holding each other's hands like a pair of children, and utterly regardless of the rest of us, they sat down on one of the settles that are always found in Spanish *patios*, and began giving their full hearts some sort of ease in words. As I said, they paid no heed whatever to our presence, and I do not remember feeling at all awkward, or in the way, only Billy and I began admiring the plants and flowers, and regaled ourselves with a draught of the sparkling cool water.

"The other lady never moved from the hammock, but occupied herself first in putting up her hair, and then in talking to, and playing with, the little dog which first announced our arrival. Excepting the two ladies and the little dog there did not seem to be any living creatures about; if there were, they must have been taking a profound *siesta*, which is, I think, more important to the Spanish constitution than meat or drink.

"Things remained *in statu quo*, or appeared to remain, for perhaps nearly an hour, then I saw that my shipmate was becoming restless and uneasy. When we got behind the bananas and were quite concealed from the captain and the lady, Morrison whispered to me:

"'Keep your hands and your legs ready, lad! for I fear there is going to be trouble. A man aye forgets danger when he foregathers with the lass he lo'es. I hear folk moving in the hoose!'

"And at that moment I also heard footsteps quite distinctly. Then Morrison no longer hesitated, but went quietly up to Captain Murray and warned him. In a moment the captain was on his feet, and kissing the lady's hands, said in English, 'at midnight to-morrow, Margarita! at the old ceiba tree!' Then we three men passed quickly into the street and started for the boat, walking at a good pace, but at the same time avoiding all appearance of haste.

"Captain Murray evidently knew every foot of the way by heart, for although we made several short cuts, we always came back into the main road by which we had come from the boat.

"As we went along at our swinging pace, and cutting off corners here and there, we came in sight of the boat in about half the time it took us to go from the boat to the top of the village. And Morrison whispered to me that he was very glad we had come to a peaceful end 'o' this foolish lassie adventure o' the captain's.' But just then an unexpected danger appeared, and made me think that the 'adventure' was not quite at an end yet.

"The boat was lying about fifty fathoms or so off shore, with our three shipmates laying quietly on their oars waiting for us, as they had been told to do. The neat boat on the calm blue water made quite a pretty picture, but a very ugly addition to the scene was a crowd of ten or a dozen fierce looking men on the shore gesticulating, yelling, and occasionally throwing sand and clods of earth in the water, which splashed uncomfortably near the boat.

"As soon as our men saw us they began to pull quietly in-shore, trying to land clear of the yelling crowd of men, but that was impossible, as the Spaniards moved along so as to get at our men as soon as the boat touched the beach.

"We learned afterwards what had set the Dagos hopping mad, and it was a very foolish

action on the part of our men, and shows 'how great a matter a little fire kindleth.' And this was how that fire was kindled which nearly cost us our lives.

"While our boat was lying on the beach and our men were sitting at their ease—the captain had instructed them not to leave the boat on any account—the gang of men who were now thirsting for their blood came along laughing and singing and shouting hilariously to our fellows. When they reached the boat they began some mild horse-play with our men, but all in high good humour. Then they sat down in a row on the beach in front of the boat as she lay with her keel on the sand, and our men sitting at their oars, ready to back off at a moment's notice.

"Thus matters continued for awhile, the Dagos laughing and singing and sometimes throwing a handful of sand at the bow of the boat, but all in the utmost good humour and fun. At last our fellows played the trick which kindled the little fire which I referred to just now. I have often played the game myself and had it played on me, and it is all right if one only keeps one's temper, and if one has nothing on which will spoil with salt water.

"When our men thought that the Spaniards had had enough of sport showering sand at the bow of the boat, they decided to back out into deep water and a safe distance from the shore. As they began to backwater, Bob Douglas's oar either accidentally or intentionally gave the water a skiff and sent a beautiful spray showering over the laughing and shrieking Dagos. Seeing the good effect of Bob's skiff the other two men joined in the fun, and in a minute the crowd of men were what Morrison graphically described as 'drookit,' and instead of the merry, laughing chaps they were a few minutes before, they were a lot of howling maniacs thirsting for blood.

"Fortunately it was a fine sandy beach without a stone to be seen anywhere, otherwise it would have fared badly with Bob and his comrades. For the Dagos were now in deadly earnest, and several of them, we learned, had set off at a run towards a steep hillside about half a mile inland where there was a quarry with plenty of nice, handy bits of jagged stone, admirably adapted to make a hole either in a boat or in a man's head.

"This was the precarious state of affairs when the captain, Morrison, and I came upon

the scene. Our commander was always quick and resourceful, and these qualities were eminently requisite for our fix that day. With a quick signal with his handkerchief and a clear whistle on two fingers, sailor fashion, he let our men know that he wished them to pull in, and then he, Morrison, and I turned and faced the savage crowd.

"Not having been in the scrimmage from the beginning we were comparatively cool, although I know that I for one realized only too well that we were in a very desperate fix, and if we did not manage to get away quickly, some of us, if not all, might lose the number of our mess. Quite calmly, and with a pleasant smile, the captain said a few words in Spanish to the angry men. I know that his Spanish vocabulary was rather limited, but he evidently made the most of it that day to soothe the Dagos' wounded feelings. Of course at that moment we could not imagine what had excited the crowd to such a pitch of wrath, but we judged by the 'drookit' state of the Dagos that our men were somehow to blame.

"Unfortunately the 'soft answer which turneth away wrath' did not achieve its legitimate result that day, for the crowd no sooner discovered

that they had a man who understood their lingo, than they poured forth their protests and curses, for some indignity which they had suffered. Then they went through a most ingenious demonstration of what would satisfy their *amour propre*. Three of them lay down on the sand, flat on their faces, and after pointing at the boat the others pretended to belabour them with nice handy sticks. This of course meant that if our men in the boat submitted to this ordeal, they would all cry quits, and shake hands! This would indeed have been *quid pro quo* with a vengeance; but Captain Murray frowned upon the exhibition—although I think he felt more inclined to laugh—and shook his head vigorously.

"As our boat touched the beach the Dagos made a rush evidently with hostile intentions, and as we saw the fellows returning who we judged had been sent for stones to pelt the boat, we all knew that prompt action alone would save us from a severe drubbing, if not a worse fate.

"The captain ordered Morrison and me to jump into the boat, and he slued bravely round upon the yelling mob, to cover our retreat. For a single moment the Spaniards staggered

back, cowed, as the common sort always are by the dauntless bearing of those they feel to be their far-and-away superiors in mind, and therefore in body. But at this critical juncture the encouraging shout of what turned out to be the stone contingent came clear and distinct, and the crowd with renewed courage made another rush.

"At that moment, when I really thought it was all up with us, one of our men—Jack Forbes was the hero's name—seized the boat's tiller, and in less time than I take to recount it, played the prettiest game of single-stick I ever saw! The tiller was a nice bit of old elm, about three feet long, solid, tough, and heavy. As the crowd bore the Captain down by sheer weight of numbers, after he had sent two of the rascals spinning to the rear, howling and bewailing their noses, Jack Forbes and the tiller came into the game. I never saw anything like it! One moment there were eight or ten men over Captain Murray, the next (it really only seemed a moment) these eight or ten men were either sprawling, or lying quite quiet on the sand, and troubling nobody. All this brought about by a few neat taps performed by an active young man with a boat's tiller!

"It was wonderful, and most admirable, but we had no time just then to admire it properly, for the stone-carriers were upon us, with deadly weapons in their hands, whereas their now silent comrades had been quite weaponless. Just as they came over the last sand-hill, yelling and shouting, we seized our oars, and although several stones dashed the water in our faces, not one hit the boat.

"So ended that day's adventure, with no more harm than a hustling to the captain—he was not even scratched—but it was a close shave. Perhaps you will say that 'all's well that ends well.' But it was not ended, and that was the pity of it, for there was another, and a sadder, adventure afterwards.

CHAPTER VI

"We reached the schooner without further mishap, but all that afternoon we kept a sharp look-out lest the Dagos should get additions to their number, and boldly decide to seek revenge by making an attack upon the schooner. There had been several instances of small craft being cut out on the coast either for real or imagined

wrongs. Of course with us there was very little danger, for with our cannon and plenty of small arms we were more than a match for any force the Spaniards could bring against us.

"At the time I am telling you of, all the Central American States were more or less in chaos and the various governments existed more in name than in reality. Spain had lost, or was fast losing, her hold of all her once vast overseas possessions: and those States, when left to themselves with their mixie-maxy populations, seemed then—as some of them seem to this day—quite unable to govern themselves decently. So when crafts went a-cruising on those seas it behoved their crews to be stout and alert, and ready for anything that might turn up.

"The morning after our serio-comic brush with the Dagos, the bo'sun piped all hands aft to hear something which the captain had to say to them, and which it was important they should know.

"When we were all mustered, Captain Murray came up the companion ladder, and took his stand at the break of the quarter-deck, which was a good position to address his audience. Standing, as he did, a couple or three feet higher

than the rest of us, every one could hear and see him without looking under, or over, his neighbour's head.

"He was always a pleasant man to look at, was our captain, and his habitual expression was rather that of good comradeship than the stern expression which most commanders either possess naturally, or acquire by regarding their crews as flocks more properly driven, after the fashion of western flock-masters, than enticed along, as is the poetic and gentle custom of eastern shepherds.

"That day, however, we all noticed that Captain Murray was somehow a changed man. His usually good natured, easy manner had given place to such a stern determined expression of look and bearing, that it set the men nudging each other, as though they were saying: 'Now we shall know the quest of the *Seahawk*, and have some exciting times.'

"The captain did not keep us long in suspense. Grasping the rail which ran athwartships at the break of the quarter-deck, he looked steadily at us all, and said:

"'I have called you together, men, to explain to you why we are here, and to tell you what I hope to accomplish, with your help. I won't

keep you long, and when I have done, all who intend to follow me implicitly will stand over to starboard. And all those who hesitate in the least degree will slue to port. We have all been in tight places together, and I have never found one of you fail me! But this time the circumstances are different, and you may think too dangerous, with too little prospect of profit to make it worth your while to engage in the adventure. And I had better say at once that I shall not coerce a single one of you to follow me on what will be a dangerous, in fact a desperate, undertaking. But whether you decide to go with me to the end or not, I shall certainly try to carry out my plan, even if I stand alone.

"'You have all been with me several years, that is, all except James Gordon, who only shipped at the beginning of this voyage' (here the captain's serious face relaxed into a smile, and most of the men went into broad grins, while I felt my face flushing confusedly) "and I know you all well enough to feel certain that every one of you will be doing what you think right and proper, whichever side of the deck you take. Moreover, I think that every one of you know me well enough to feel convinced that what I am going to attempt is right and

proper, or I would not attempt it, much less ask your assistance.

"'Four years ago I laid the schooner up in Kingston, leaving you all on full wages, while I went home to see my people after being parted from them for several years. I was absent on that trip nearly a year, and although I think you must have had a pretty easy time of it, yet I also think that you were all jolly glad to see me back again, and to get once more into active service!'

"Here every man raised his cap, and said in a genuine tone, which showed that the words came from the heart, 'Yes, sir!' The captain was evidently pleased, for he smiled and proceeded in a more cheerful voice.

"'On that visit home my sister introduced me to a friend of hers, a Spanish young lady who had been sent to Edinburgh by her father in Guatemala for her education. It so happened that my sister was in the same school and same class as this young lady—Margarita Alvaro—daughter of an officer in a high position in this very port of Yzabel which I visited yesterday, and where some of you foolishly got into trouble with the people, which was a great pity, and may, I fear, lead to further trouble.

"'My sister and the young lady I refer to had been class-mates for some years and were very much attached to each other. Margarita was frequently at my mother's house. In fact, she almost lived there, being my sister's constant companion, and, having few other friends, my mother's house was really her home.

"'As I have told you, I went home for the express purpose of seeing my family, and having no business whatever to occupy my attention, I spent all my time with them. In this way I was almost daily in Margarita's society, and the natural consequence was that we loved each other and became engaged. She was, and is, the most beautiful lady I ever met, and her mind and disposition are as true, good, and noble, as her person is beautiful!

"'I lingered in Edinburgh to take the same ship for Jamaica in which her father had taken passage for the señorita. Her father had arranged to meet her in Kingston, and as soon as we arrived he came on board. That was just three years ago, as you all, no doubt, remember, and from that day I never saw her again until yesterday! At long intervals we have got letters through to each other, and I have learned that her father has used all means, short of violence,

to force her to marry the Governor of the State, a man in high authority at present, and who will be President when Guatemala attains the independence which is shortly expected. Yesterday I planned with Margarita to rescue her from her miserable life. At midnight she and her maid will be at the great ceiba tree which you can see yonder, near to where we landed yesterday. About once a year or so, that old tree has been our faithful post office, where we have exchanged letters by leaving them in a spot where a branch has been broken off and left a nice, dry cavity. William Morrison knows of all this, and he also knows that twice before yesterday he and I have gone, at much risk of our lives, to Don Alvaro's house; but in both cases I failed to see Margarita. And, unfortunately, on both occasions I had stormy interviews with her father, which has not improved matters. But yesterday I learned from Margarita that her father is absent on a visit to some friends on the West Coast. And she has decided to fly with me to Jamaica, and we shall be married ere Don Alvaro hears a word about his daughter's flight.

"'A couple of hours after midnight (that is when Dagos sleep soundest) I want twelve men

in the longboat, with muffled oars, of course. We shall land in a thicket of pampas grass and manzanita which I saw yesterday. That spot is within ten minutes hard run of the ceiba tree. As quietness and secrecy are absolutely necessary, I shall only take two of you with me when we land, but we shall take some rockets with us, and if we unfortunately are attacked we shall signal for the rest of you to rush to the rescue. We must make as little noise as possible, and for that reason you who go ashore with me must only be armed with knife and cutlass. I know that the sort of Spaniards we are likely to meet will have no fire-arms, and, as I have said, it is important that we keep as quiet as possible. Of course, you who remain on the ship will have an anxious time, but you must keep on the alert, and see to it that your arms are in good order, and the two cannon loaded and primed. I shall give the chief officer all directions how to act in case I do not return.

"'Now, men, I think that is all I have to say at present. The only thing that remains is for all who will support me in this desperate undertaking (for I know quite well it *is* desperate after the way we sent those fellows raving-mad yesterday) to stand over to star-

board, and all those who think it a foolish, wrong, and too dangerous adventure to be undertaken by quiet God-fearing seamen, stand over to port.'

"The crew, as if they had been on drill, stepped like one man to starboard, and so suddenly did they go that our beautiful little craft felt the impulse, and heeled over a few inches, which gave solemn old Bill Morrison the chance to get off the joke of his life.

"'Three cheers for the captain, mates! The *Seahawk* is bowing her approval, as well as the rest of us!'

"This sally so tickled the crew that they gave Captain Murray three rousing cheers. But even that did not seem enough to their simple, kindly, British hearts, after the generous manly way in which the captain had taken them into his confidence. Old Morrison soon jaloused their feelings, and did the proper, kindly action, at the right moment, which is so rarely done in this world, more 's the pity! The good old seaman doffed his cap, and, stepping briskly across the deck, seized Captain Murray's hand, and shook it warmly like a true comrade and loyal shipmate. This gave the rest their cue, and every man followed suit, and if ever the captain felt

doubtful of his men before that morning I don't think he ever had any doubt of their loyalty after that splendid demonstration.

CHAPTER VII

"Two hours after midnight twelve of us left in the schooner's longboat. The captain took the helm himself, as he knew exactly where the landing was which would afford a good hiding-place for the boat. Of course, our oars were muffled, and, as we had received strict orders not to shuffle our feet, or even to whisper to each other, excepting to pass an order along from man to man, we glided over the calm water as absolutely noiseless as though we had been a company of ghosts in a phantom boat.

"After what I judged to be about an hour of this silent voyaging, we drew near the shore, and the order was whispered along, 'cease rowing,' and then 'unship oars.' And the boat slid into a thicket of great, tall reeds, and overhanging bushes which enclosed us on all sides, leaving us only exposed to the glorious tropical sky. When we had unshipped our oars, we

slowly and silently pulled the boat along by the reeds, or whatever we could lay hold of, and presently we felt the keel grate on the shingle, and then we knew that we had touched solid land.

"Each one of us had been given our orders before we left the schooner, so there was not the least confusion or misunderstanding. Captain Murray landed first, then Bill Morrison, and I followed close behind. The rest of the men had been instructed to remain in the boat absolutely motionless and silent, until we returned, or until they saw a rocket sent up, when they would know that we had been discovered, and attacked, in which case six men were to rush to our help, and the others to keep the boat with their lives!

"When we landed no word was spoken by any one. The captain, Morrison, and I kept close together, pushing our way through the tangled pampas grass and scrubby bush. After we got clear of the thicket we had to cross a perfectly open stretch of ground, a mile, perhaps, wide. This was, of course, a dangerous piece of navigation, for we were quite exposed to prying eyes from any direction. However, no one saw us, or if they did they never molested us, maybe wishing us to fall into the trap which I have no

doubt they had set, having, I suppose, discovered by some means the secret assignation which Captain Murray and the lady had made.

"I have often wondered since that adventure (as we are all prone to wonder after the event) whether it would not have been wiser to take our whole available force that night, prepared to cut our way through any opposition quickly and effectively. And again, whether it were not sheer madness for three unarmed—at least, not visibly armed—men to walk through the town in broad daylight, as we had done. The Guatemala Dagos did not love us British at that time, but they had the sense as a rule to behave peaceably. So I suppose our captain depended upon that, and determined to see the lady at all hazards, and boldly face the consequences. He had been at Don Alvaro's mansion before, and knew how to find his way there again; and, as it turned out, he and Margarita were very fortunate in their meeting, as I have told you. And in spite of the obliterating effects of time, and a sailor's rough-and-tumble life, I have always been thankful to God that they had that quiet, happy meeting in this world of sorrow and mischance.

"When we came near to the edge of the forest country, there was a clear long-drawn

whistle from some invisible source, and immediately thereafter two dark-clad figures rushed out from the wood, and the next moment Margarita and her maid were in our midst, the lady saying in a breathless whisper, as she clasped the captain's hand, 'Fly, Hugh! Fly! We are betrayed—fly at once! Leave me! They dare not injure *me*!'

"With a hurried salute to the lady, Captain Murray told Morrison to send up a rocket, which he did as quickly as he could light the fuse, and the beautiful, gleaming signal went straight up like a living thing that knew the importance of its message. In less than half a minute we saw two others go up in reply to ours, one from the boat, and one from the schooner, and we knew that faithful hearts and strong hands were on the way to our assistance. But we were fully aware that it would take them some considerable time, even if no mishap befell them, to reach us.

"To our right, and quite clear of the dense forest, there stood a great tree (which I learned was the ceiba where the captain and the lady had arranged to meet) and as we heard voices coming nearer and nearer, we decided to seek refuge under its splendid shelter. It would have

been madness to face overwhelming numbers in the open: but with the great trunk of the tree to save us from a rear attack, there was considerable hope that we could withstand an assault until the rescue party reached us.

"Of course the lovers' plans had all miscarried. They had reckoned that Margarita could reach the ceiba tree without an alarm being raised, and Captain Murray had arranged things for a quiet, safe escape off to the schooner.

"But either there had been a spy in Don Alvaro's house, who had betrayed the whole matter, and reported the true destination of the two ladies (when they sauntered out apparently for an evening stroll), and set armed men to intercept the elopement, and possibly take Murray and some of his men prisoners, and thus raise a grand political crisis—a thing dear to the Dago's heart!—or else the gang of villagers, whose savage ire Bob Douglas and the others had thoroughly roused by the wetting they gave them, had determined to have revenge by hook or by crook, and had just prowled about watching for any chance that might turn up. And as 'Satan finds some mischief still for idle hands to do,' these idle vagabonds were the sole cause of the mischief, or perhaps

Satan, doubting their efficiency, if alone, to deal with us, had induced some one in Don Alvaro's household to send out a contingent to spy upon the señorita, and make trouble if any thing turned up, and then by joining the two parties he was sure to win, as he too often does win in this world! How it all came about I can only surmise, for I don't know for certain; but I know that when the real fight developed, we were hopelessly overmatched, and if the rescue had not arrived in time you would never have heard the sequel of that adventure, at any rate not from me.

"We had hardly gotten into position—Captain Murray in the middle, Morrison on his right, I on his left, with the two ladies crouching down in a hollow of the trunk of the great tree behind us—when more than twenty men came rushing forward, evidently knowing exactly where to find us, doubly convincing me, whenever I reflect upon it, that they were the Alvaro family contingent, who had been carefully instructed where to go, and how to act if they were resisted.

CHAPTER VIII

"In those days, especially in out-of-the-way parts of the world, the percussion cap firearm had not yet come much into fashion, and the heavy old flint-lock musket was still in general use. But in a hastily arranged expedition like the one now attacking us, the Spaniards—as a rule—were only armed with swords and handy knives, but these were generally of the splendid Toledo quality; and most effective weapons they were at close quarters.

"On our side, Captain Murray was the only one of us who carried a pair of the newly invented percussion pistols. Why he did not arm us all in the same manner I don't know—unless it was for fear that in case of meeting opposition we might, in our excitement, use these dangerous things prematurely, and so do more harm than good to our cause. The captain had strongly impressed upon us all before we left the schooner that our enterprise was absolutely one of peace; and not a man on our side was to raise a hand until he, Murray, gave the signal to fight!

"The first gleam of the tropical dawn was breaking as the Dagos charged, and we could make a pretty good estimate of their numbers, and plainly see their arrangements, as they came straight at us, without apparently expecting us to show fight at all. But in that they were making a foolish mistake, as the Spaniards have so often done, when taking the cool appearance of British men under some desperate circumstance for pusillanimity.

"When the squad was within a few yards of us, Captain Murray called in a quick, sharp tone, as if he were giving the order to his own men—only of course he spoke in Spanish—'Stand!' The Dagos pulled up, and stood stock-still; indeed they obeyed a great deal more quickly than they would have done at the slip-slop sort of command of their own officers. Our captain went a yard or two nearer to the gang, and said—again in Spanish:

"'If you come a step nearer to us you will be killed! If you do not molest us, we will not molest you!'

"The officer who seemed to be the leader of the party was a tall, fine looking man, and by some whispered angry words between the young ladies it flashed through my mind—youth is

quick at these discoveries—that he was the man whom her father wished Margarita to marry. Whether this was actually the case, of course I do not know; but certainly when Captain Murray ceased speaking and stepped back to us, the officer turned fiercely to his men, and said some words which evidently roused their courage, or hate, or other passions, for with a wild yell they drew their swords and charged point-blank at us.

"Morrison and I quickly had our cutlasses in position, but the captain prepared to give the chargers a taste of shot first, and afterwards cold steel. As the tall officer came carefully over the rough broken ground, a fathom or two in advance of his men, Captain Murray again called 'Stand!' and he levelled his heavy double-barrelled pistol: then, after a moment's pause, there was a flash and a ringing report, and the leader fell forward on his face, and lay quite still. At this the Spaniards hesitated, drew back a bit, and stared at their silent comrade as if debating in their minds whether to fly or make another dash at us. Perhaps a touch of shame—they being in such overwhelming numbers in comparison with us—decided them; but whatever it was, with a shout of rage the whole gang

made at us again. Before they reached our swords' points, Captain Murray accounted for three more of them, and then they were upon us!

"Four of the twenty odd men of whom the party originally consisted were quiet enough by this time; but there were still enough stout fellows left to make four or five to one against us: altogether too long odds, when it came to close quarters, to leave us much chance.

"The Spaniards are, as a rule, very handy with bits of steel, either swords or knives. And in those days they had plenty of practice both among themselves and with foreigners, and, as I say, they were exceedingly clever with their weapons in finding the exact spot in a man's body to let out his life with the least possible amount of trouble.

"We had much practice at cutlass drill on the *Seahawk*, our drill-master being William Morrison, who was an expert at the game. He taught us many clever things with that handy weapon. One smart trick was how to whip off our jackets, and wrap up our left arms to use as shields, all to be done in the twinkling of an eye, in case we were caught unawares. And it was well for me that clever old William had taught me the game properly, or I would never

have come out of that scrimmage to tell the tale.

"Several of the Dagos engaged us in front, while the others made a dash round behind, evidently intending to take us in flank, getting what shelter was possible by sticking close to the tree.

"Captain Murray called to Morrison and me to guard the approach from each side, while he took care of the fellows in front, which he did with wonderful dexterity, for in five minutes or less he put six or seven more of his assailants *hors de combat* as safely as those he had brought down with his pistols. But he still continued to be hotly engaged with the rest of the gang, who did not seem to be at all daunted by the fate of their comrades.

"Morrison and I had brought down a man apiece, without suffering a scratch ourselves. But we were all becoming more or less blown by our terrible exertions, and were eagerly hoping for the arrival of our rescue.

"Margarita and her companion had remained absolutely quiet (excepting for the passionate words I heard at the beginning of the fight), huddled down in a hollow of the great roots of the ceiba tree. Now we were startled and con-

fused by cries of 'El fuego! El fuego!" in wild screams from the terror-stricken girls. The cause was not far to seek. The Spaniards, finding, I suppose, that they could not dislodge us by fair means, had taken to foul. Just beyond reach of our swords, and hidden from our view by the tree, they were putting fire to the dry grass and masses of withered leaves, knowing that once the fire was set agoing it would sweep around the tree; and then it would be death for us by fire or sword!

"At this critical moment there came—and it was the sweetest strain of music I had ever heard up to that hour of my life—the sharp, clear, well-known signal of our Bo'sun's whistle! and we knew that our comrades were close at hand. But the Dagos also knew it, and made a final and desperate charge.

"When their blood is up Spaniards can make as gallant an end as most men. It is in cool courage—'the waiting time,' as Napoleon called it—when their fiery southern blood becomes pale and cold, that they fail. So according to their nature, when they heard the whistle, and realized that our rescue was at hand, they never showed a scrap of the white feather—they were too madly excited for that—they only

redoubled their efforts to cut us three men down ere our rescue reached us.

"Not waiting for the fire to dislodge us, they made a combined, fierce assault from each side, and direct in front; and then our tragic calamity befell us. A clever, active little fellow, stripped to the waist—one of our front assailants—sprang ahead of his comrades, with his sword aimed straight at our captain's heart. His spring was so sudden, and so utterly regardless of the fellow's own life, that it actually put me in mind—at that awful moment—of a gallant and fearful charge of a Spanish knight upon a Moorish horseman, which was described both in print and by picture in an old book in my father's library.

"I suppose it was impossible to parry the reckless attack of the Spaniard, as the whole weight of the man, and his impetuous rush, carried him close up to Murray, in spite of the latter's sword going clean through the fellow's body! At that fatal instant, with a cry of endearment, Margarita threw herself on her lover's breast, intending, no doubt, to shield him; and so she did to some extent, but it was at the cost of her own life, for although the captain tried to swing her clear, it was too late to avoid the fierce thrust of the Spaniard's sword, which

not only went through her body, but also went far enough into Murray's breast to make me feel certain that he too was beyond all earthly weal or woe.

"All three fell without a word or groan, and at that moment our rescue party of brave fellows rushed up, with cries of encouragement for us, and some sharp cuts and thrusts for the Dagos. Then there was silence. The Spaniards, or rather those of them who survived, vanished instantly, and we turned our attention to the captain and the lady. When the fatal sword was withdrawn, and they were tenderly laid side by side, it was evident to the least experienced of us that Margarita was quite dead; and indeed so seemed the captain, but as his wound still bled rather freely, we hoped this was a sign that life was not quite extinct. We brought water from a little spring near by, and while Margarita's maid attended to her mistress, and while the more experienced of our men attended to the captain, the rest of us turned all our energy to the task of extinguishing the fire, which fortunately, owing to the stillness of the morning, had not yet taken a strong hold; and with water brought from the spring in caps, boots, duck jackets, etc., we soon put an end to that terrible danger.

"It was marvellous how we escaped scatheless —all excepting our captain—in that wild mêlée with the Spaniards. But if the rescue had not arrived in the nick of time, we would have been driven out of our strong position by the fire, and then Morrison and I would have been at the Dagos' mercy, and would have had a very short shrift.

"After freeing ourselves, and especially the dead girl and her companion, from the danger of the fire, our next duty was to decide what to do with the body of captain Murray, for by this time we had concluded him to be a dead man. As for poor, beautiful Margarita, all we could get from her companion was an urgent admonition to depart at once, as a strong detachment would certainly be sent out as soon as the state of affairs was reported by the men who had run away. I never saw such splendid calmness as the cool way this young woman urged us to escape, while she knelt beside her dead friend, lovingly arranging the masses of splendid black hair like a Glory around the beautiful white face.

"As this calm, sensible young lady knew the whole circumstances of the sad case, and that Margarita had met her death at the hands of one of her own people, and as it was quite impossible

for us to help the dead Margarita, or the living girl—who kept vehemently urging us to escape —we concluded that we had better do as she advised, although it went sorely against the grain to leave the poor young thing alone with her dead!

"Matters being in this position,—and it being almost a certainty that we would be annihilated if we did not make our escape quickly—we hastily constructed a litter, and laying the captain thereon, silently doffed our caps to the *two* ladies, and departed from that strange, sad scene, which had cost all concerned so dearly!

"Fortunately we encountered neither man nor woman on our way to the boat, which we reached without further incident or mishap. We marched very slowly and carefully, fearing that a stumble or sudden movement might extinguish the last spark of life that still possibly flickered in our captain's heart. Very quietly, but with all speed, we pushed the boat out of the clump of bushes and water-flags, and pulled away down the harbour to the *Seahawk*, presenting a very dismal and depressing spectacle to our anxiously waiting shipmates, as we ran alongside.

"After laying Captain Murray on his bed,

and deputing old Bill Morrison as nurse, who was still the freshest of us all in spite of his three score years, and who would not leave the captain, although he himself sorely needed rest —as indeed we all did—the mate ordered the men to run up the anchor, and set all plain sail.

"The light morning breeze was fortunately from the west, and so gave us a fair wind for running down the gulf and crossing the bar. The *Seahawk* only drew eight feet aft, and we managed to slide over the shallow stretch with no further excitement than scraping up the mud a bit and perhaps alarming the flukes and other inhabitants of the soft, cool, peaceful mud-flats.

"The westerly breeze did not die down as it usually does towards noon on the coast, but sent us along at eight or nine knots all that day and night. Next day it drew a couple of points to the north, but still we were able to lay a course for Jamaica, our object being to reach Kingston as quickly as possible on account of Captain Murray, for by this time we all began to hope that the lamp of life still burned. But if it did, it burned so dimly that we feared unless we found more skilful medicos than even good old Bill Morrison and our smart second mate—

who had acquired his medical acumen by answering the door bell in a surgeon's office for a year just before he ran away to sea at the mature age of thirteen years—that the feeble flame would go out altogether.

"But the good God's breeze held on finely, and we reached Kingston after a remarkably short run from the coast. We soon had a couple of surgeons from the fleet, and after doing all that was possible for the wounded man, and holding out some feeble hopes of his possible recovery, they left one of their own trained nurse-men to watch and to signal when there was any sign of a change. The doctors advised that the captain should remain on the schooner, as moving him in his present condition would be certain to extinguish any flickering flame of life that might still be remaining.

"Awnings were rigged fore and aft, and the ship was kept as cool as possible and absolutely quiet. Besides the surgeon's nurse-man, the mate appointed Bill Morrison and me to attend upon the captain, taking watch turn and turn about. I know that old Bill Morrison was a most suitable man for the position, but why the mate chose an inexperienced youngster like me for such an important duty I do not

know, unless he had an inkling of my deep affection for Captain Murray, and thought that feeling amply qualified me for the onerous position in spite of my youth and inexperience.

"On the second night after our arrival in Kingston it was my watch in the captain's cabin from twelve midnight to two a.m. Everything was absolutely silent, no bells being struck, and the men on deck slipping about with bare feet, and any order by an officer, or response by a man, being passed in whispers. Morrison and the man-o'-war nurse were both sound asleep in the main cabin, as I could hear by a mild, occasional snore, when to my intense joy, but at the same time to my amazement and awe, as though I had seen the wraith of one I loved (which in a manner was the case, for all we who had been in it from the beginning still supposed him to be actually dead, although we kept on trying to hope he was yet alive), the captain raised his right hand, and turned his head a little, and looked at me with clear intelligent eyes, proving that he was perfectly conscious.

"There was only one bunk in the cabin, a comfortable, wide bed, raised about three feet from the deck. The lamp was turned low so as only to afford a very subdued light, but yet

quite sufficient to enable me to note the startling change in the captain's face; the change from the solemn, calm aloofness of the dead, to the mobile, sympathetic expression of the living. I have said that I felt amazement and awe, but my young heart was overpowered by the still stronger passion, *love*, and I slid to my knees beside the bed and kissed my captain's pale lips, and as I did so he laid his hand on my—then—curly, bushy head and whispered:

"'Good lad! good, brave lad!' And that is the most prized commendation I ever received in a long career not devoid of commendations and highly-valued medals, etc.

"Captain Murray quite recovered, much to the astonishment of the doctors and everybody else. I sailed with him twenty-five years, the last twenty as his chief mate. And I think it is given to few men to have the perfect friendship and confidence which existed between Captain Hugh Murray and myself.

"In all our sailing we never again touched the coast of Guatemala, although our crew were eager to avenge what they considered the unprovoked assault upon us and the cruel death of the captain's beautiful betrothed. But when the men actually came with a petition to be led

back to repay the Spaniards, Captain Murray only shook his head, saying quietly:

"'I thank you very deeply, my lads, but it cannot be. There has been enough of sorrow and death. And remember, "vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."

"We never heard a word from Guatemala either officially or privately, regarding the tragic ending of 'The Quest of the *Seahawk*.' I suppose the Spaniards thought it the wiser plan to let the matter rest, as practically they were the aggressors, and had (as they supposed) killed our captain, whom they knew to be an Englishman of note.

"It was a very curious fact, at least it seemed so to me, that Captain Murray remembered all the sad circumstances regarding Margarita's death, and his own fall, as well as her being laid at his side, and her companion kneeling by her and weeping quietly, while smoothing back the hair from the dead girl's face. But everything after that terrible catastrophe was a total blank until he opened his eyes and saw me sitting by his bedside.

"At quiet times in after years my friend Captain Murray and I used to speculate as to where his soul could have been during all those

days of utter oblivion. But we never got nearer a solution of the mystery than a South Sea Islander, or a great European savant, would have gotten, the reason of our failures no doubt being the fact that 'the secret things belong unto the Lord our God.'

"I could tell you a great deal more about our voyaging and adventures with the beautiful little craft *Seahawk*, but I think I will forbear. A great sage has told us among other wise things that 'a tale should never be too long.'"

ENVOI

ENVOI

"THE EARTH WITH HER BARS"

The Heart's Question

Why are true words aye of sorrow?
  Earth's burden from ever of old—
Men dreaming dreams of to-morrow,
  But to-morrow the lips are cold!

Earth's Bars, and darkness, and weeping,
  Joys only a fleeting breath;
An Angel the secret keeping,
  And the Angel's name is Death?

The Soul's Answer

Because we cannot pierce with mortal eyes
  The mystery! Shadows are o'er the land!
But when the morn shall dawn in Paradise,
  The Light will break, and we shall understand

Why our tears fell, and why our hearts were sore,
  Groping in darkness, and in fear, and pain.
Wailing our lost, as lost for evermore!
  Moaning—" Are Love and Hope but shadows vain!"

Yes, we shall know—as Christ now understands—
  That what we deem'd as loss was Love and gain!
His firm, safe pressure on our feeble hands
  Guiding us when we thought 'twas needless pain.

We are but straylings wand'ring in the sun,
The sun must set, or we would ne'er find rest:
But when the dawn shall break, and night is done,
Then we shall know our Father's plans are best!

Shall know that loss and grief and pain are good—
These furnace fires must purify the gold—
Shall know the truth, now dimly understood,
That through earth's thorn-clad paths we find the Fold!

Shall find the eyes we closed in hopeless gloom—
The hands we folded after Death's dark strife—
The feet we laid to rest within the tomb,
Waiting to meet us 'neath the tree of Life!

Courage! My brother of the broken heart.
Hearken! Thou too shalt hear the Heavenly Spheres
Whose songs are lost amid earth's bars and mart—
But pause and listen!—God *shall* dry thy tears!

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Works by Francis Sinclair

EXTRACTS FROM PRESS OPINIONS

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FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Sinclair's latest collection of short stories continues the style and manner which brought him success with "Under North Star and Southern Cross." His is the simple narrative style, which eschews ornamentation and mere verbal cleverness. He spins his yarns, gathered "from the four winds" in what seems to have been a long life of roving, in a plain homely way, leaving the story "to speak for itself." The manner, as Mr. Sinclair uses it, is undoubtedly effective. His stories, based as they seem to be upon actual experience, have a simple human interest that would have been spoiled by more elaborate treatment. He describes life in the Southern Seas with sympathy and understanding, shows what a noble fellow savage man often is, and rouses pity with his description of "black-birding"—the slavery trade—in the South Sea islands. He then sketches the gradual degradation of a white man in a pathetic narrative of a gallant soldier who, after squandering his patrimony, sinks below the surface in the squalor of London slumland. The mystical story of a magic ring introduces the reader to a different atmosphere, but in a simple tale of lost love in the Western Highlands Mr. Sinclair is back again to the common things of life. Never long out of touch with ordinary human nature, "From the Four Winds" is a wholesome and stimulating book which cannot but appeal to readers of fiction with quiet tastes.—*The Scotsman.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Sinclair has made for himself a peculiar niche in the world of literature. He has been a great traveller for many years in unknown lands, and he has told the story of those wanderings, not in the ordinary way of travel books, but by means of a coterie of old friends who meet together once

a year, each one undertaking to tell some tale of adventure which has actually befallen him. It may fairly be assumed that this coterie is quite fictitious, and the stories all emanate from the "picture gallery of the author's own memory," assisted, doubtless, by a very vivid imagination. Whether these stories are based on facts or fiction does not very much matter, they are exceedingly readable, and undoubtedly the picturesque scenes in which they occur and the description of voyages among the little known islands of the Pacific could only be derived from personal experience. It may be said that the author is not only a born story-teller, he is no mean poet, and the author's personal contributions to this work are a series of poems as a preface to each story. The prelude to "Blackbirding" is a poem of twelve stanzas, from which we quote two verses :—

But the hold of a craft in the tropics isn't half as
free and nice
As the green grass under the palm trees, and the
cool breeze touched with spice;
And our "passengers" felt the difference, and
drooped like wilted flowers,
And their spirits went back at a ruinous rate to
their own vine-covered bowers.

They made no fuss about dying, just slipped away
to their rest,
As peaceful and quiet as children asleep on a
mother's breast;
They never seemed to be troubled with visions
of hell and woe,
And back-loads of sin *et cetera*, which make *us*
so loth to go!

The volume is handsomely got up, and should find many readers.—*Publishers' Circular.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Readers of Mr. Francis Sinclair's earlier volumes will accord a hearty welcome to this further series of stories, in which are noticeable the excellent qualities which marked their predecessors. We describe them as "stories," but some of them have a significance not readily associated with the term. In "How John Trueman Learned His Lesson," for example, we have something more than the entertaining yarn of a parson who has become a South Sea Islander, we have a wonderful glimpse of the heroic Father Damien in his slow martyrdom as comforter of lepers. Indeed, there is much in such a volume as this that lifts it out of the rank of fiction as commonly understood by the gentlemen of England who write or read at home at ease. Mr. Sinclair seems to have seen life at close grips in many parts of the world, and he is gifted with very considerable literary ability in putting before us that which he has seen or heard. With things of his own to say, and a style of his own in which to say them, he deserves to be classed with the small company of writers, of whom Mr. Joseph Conrad is perhaps the chief, who have travelled much and far, mixed with all sorts and conditions of men, and brought home—literature. Five stories—to keep to the conventional term—are here presented, and they are supposed to have been told by three men on the deck of the pearl-fishery boat Lapwing, in the little harbour of Heao, in the Marquesas Islands. The three narrators are Kinross, the skipper, the Rev. John Trueman, itinerant missionary in the Pacific, and Samuel Kent, trader and Government agent, "one of the lost-gentleman caste." The all-important fourth is the author who would have us believe that his chief contribution to the whole consists of the appropriate verse prefaces to the stories. It is the parson who tells how he learned his lesson from a visit to Father Damien. After a

hard time in an East-end parish he had sought to read the riddle of life from another standpoint altogether by becoming an "utterly poor and vagrant tramp," and then from another standpoint by missionary work in the Pacific. As missionary he meets Bishop Patteson and Father Damien, and "learns his lesson." The second story, told by the skipper, deals with the terrible crime—parent of many other crimes—of "Black-birding in the Pacific," telling of the experiences of those on board a small schooner, who cruised about seeing what could be done to fight the evil. The cruise of the Lapwing was presumably in the early seventies, so that Mr. Sinclair has slipped into an anachronism, making Lieutenant Westgarth say, "After this cruise, I think I will take saccharine." Sam Kent's story describes how the son of a Hebrew solicitor in London came to be a wanderer and a trader in the Pacific. He, too, reads an Oriental story of "The Legend of the Magic Rings," and the skipper gives a reminiscence of his childhood in "Bridget Macleod, of Whinnie Braes." It will be seen that Mr. Sinclair's narrators range far in the scenes they present—incidentally, there are some remarkable impressions of London, and sketches of "lost" Londoners—but through all there is a unity of spirit imparting to the whole book an indescribable quality. Mr. Sinclair has given us a volume which it is a pleasure to read, with descriptions of men and their doings that once read are little likely to be forgotten. Such a work is far removed from the current ruck of fiction with which it is likely to be confused only by those who do not look beyond the title page.—*The Daily Telegraph.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Sinclair has been led to publish "From the Four Winds" by the kindly reception given to his last work,

"Under North Star and Southern Cross." Thus encouraged he has explored the picture gallery of his memory, and here sets down, at once naturally and vividly, the recollections of vanished scenes and comrades of old days under Pacific skies. His characters are few: an itinerant Cornish missionary; Sam Kent, trader and Government agent; and Kinross, the skipper of the schooner Lapwing. Upon the deck of the schooner in the little harbour of Heao, Mr. Sinclair gets his small company together, and starts the story-telling, each of the stories being more or less a record of personal experience or reminiscence. Some of the stories are thrilling; scarcely any is without a healthy lesson, though not too obtrusively conveyed. One gets to like and to seem to know all the characters; we seem, indeed, to be listening to the stories from their lips, and when each ends we are anticipative and eager for the next. Nor is Mr. Sinclair a skilled story-teller only; in the preludes to his tales he shows a power in expressive versification which is far above the ordinary, and commands admiration. We hope he may successfully search his memory for materials for another volume, which will be welcome if it be of so good a quality as "From the Four Winds."—*The Bristol Daily Mercury.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Francis Sinclair has already made a name for himself as a story-teller by two books, "Where the Sun Sets" and "Under North Star and Southern Cross." He has once more, as he expresses it, explored the picture gallery of his memory, and given us the present volume of five stories, each of them having the characteristics of his previous work—entrancing interest and charming verisimilitude. Mr. Sinclair's name proclaims him to be a

Scotsman, but his writings stamp him a citizen of the world, and his yarns are spun on the deck of a little trading schooner in the pleasant waters of Heao, in the Marquesas Islands. He has seen and observed the brown men of the Pacific in all sorts of conditions, and he contrasts them—not always unfavourably—with the so-called civilised men of Europe and the West. He has lived in London and studied the lives of the outcasts of society and the down-trodden portion of humanity. He has wandered on the moors of Kintyre, herded on the shores of Clyde, and looked through the mists of Ailsa Craig and the distant coast-line of Ayrshire. All these and many more impressions are worked up in his admirable pictures of life at home and abroad, giving as a result a collection of tales full of incident, adventure, and mystery, couched in a plain unvarnished style, which attracts as much by its simplicity as by its outspoken truthfulness.—*The Aberdeen Daily Journal.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Sinclair is already favourably known for various collections of tales, and here he gives us a further batch of the same type. These sketches are much above the average of this kind, and it would appear that the people portrayed really existed, and that the events took place almost exactly in the old-fashioned, conservative manner in which they are set forth. The stories are full of mystery and romance, and they gain in effect from the unforced manner of narration. Mr. Sinclair has explored the picture gallery of his memory and recalled many a vanished scene and good comrade of his restless pilgrimage, and he has imparted an additional charm to his latest work by the interpolation of several poetical snatches, which show him to be a poet of more than

minor magnitude. One of the daintiest, simplest, and most appealing of these poetical interludes is the one in "How John Trueman Learned his Lesson," and is written under the text "For in much wisdom is much grief; and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow." The stanza begins—

I ask no more—I trust no more my brain,
For wisdom deems
The goals men seek are all in vain;
Dreams—idle dreams.

A little while and I shall know
What every sage,
With weary toil hath failed to show
Age after age.

It is the expression of the author's creed, and contains the philosophy of a strong man in the language of a child.—*The Yorkshire Observer.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Francis Sinclair's books are well known and appreciated. They combine in a pleasant form the experiences and observation of one who has a close knowledge with all parts of the world. There is fact and fancy in the writings of this author. A prose poet, in this volume, like Silas Wegg, he sometimes drops into verse now and again. Mr. Sinclair adopts the form of the story-telling company of friends here, and though all are different, it is to be said that every one of the tales is marked by power and a certain charm that is characteristic of the work of this gifted author. The wild life of the South Seas is dealt with pretty fully in the tales of this volume, and Mr. Sinclair adds a Scottish story to close a book,

that is of wide human appeal. It can be taken up with the assurance of providing agreeable reading, being a fitting successor to the same writer's "Under North Star and Southern Cross."—*Newcastle Daily Journal.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

"From the Four Winds" is the title of a fresh volume of South Sea yarns by Mr. Francis Sinclair. Although complete in themselves they are a continuation of his previous volume "Under North Star and Southern Cross," for the same group reappears to play the part of narrators, and we can quite believe the author's assurance that they are gathered from his memory, for they are told in that artless way which belongs to transcripts from actual experience. Each of the five episodes is prefaced by a poetical introduction written by the author, who has a very happy gift of verse-making. The soft, easy-going atmosphere of the Southern Seas is pictured to the life, and the writer displays the keenest sympathy with the natives, and the evils which intercourse with white men brings upon them. One story illustrates very strikingly their almost amphibious habits, and shows how on one occasion when shipwrecked they declined to abandon their white companion in a sea infested with sharks, though as a result only nine out of the original twenty succeeded in swimming ashore. "Blackbirding" is a very powerful indictment of the old system of recruiting labour by force, which in the author's opinion cost the life of the martyred Bishop Patteson. In another story we have a vivid picture of the sufferings of the followers of the Emperor Maximilian, after his arrest and execution in Mexico, and appended to this is a very striking Eastern romance of "Two Magic Rings."—*Nottingham Guardian.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Former books from the same pen have met with so much approval that to express an opinion of the merits of "From the Four Winds" it is only necessary to say that it should prove no less popular than its predecessors. Mr. Sinclair knew the enchanted islands of the South Pacific in the days before commonplace had banished romance, and these stories and poems—the author has a pretty facility in versification—are for the most part directly concerned with places and people and with incidents real and imaginary that serve to show life as it was lived then. In one of the stories that make up the volume Mr. Sinclair has laid the scene in Scotland, and it is by no means the least notable item in the collection. —*Newcastle Chronicle.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

One of the best volumes of short stories published for a considerable time is "From the Four Winds," by Francis Sinclair, author of "Ballads and Poems from the Pacific" and "Under North Star and Southern Cross." He narrates his events with a directness which interests all readers. In "Black-Birding in the Pacific" he deals to some extent with the slave trade, while in "Bridget Macleod of Whinnie Braes" he gives his readers a capital story of the Scottish Highlands. Others are "How John Trueman Learned his Lesson," "Sam Kent's Story," and "The Legend of the Magic Rings."—*The Belfast News-Letter.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

As in "Under North Star and Southern Cross," Mr. Sinclair here recalls memories of scenes and comrades seen and met in foreign climes, and the five stories are, in our opinion, fully equal to what he gave us in the previous book. We like best "Sam Kent's Story," which presents a powerful study of character in Leopold Durand, an extraordinary mixture of the gallant, adventurous soldier and the hopeless London loafer, and "Bridget Macleod of Whinnie Braes," the story of a man's perversity and a woman's resolution, but "The Legend of the Magic Rings" (from the Hebrew MS. of Jacob El Nathan) is also remarkably good reading. The book should certainly enhance the reputation of the author.—*The Bookseller.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

This volume is a collection of five very entertaining stories, supposed to be told on the quarterdeck of the schooner "Lapwing" in the Port of Heao in the Marquesas Islands, whilst waiting to lay in a miscellaneous cargo of South Sea products. In consequence all the stories converge on, if they do not actually touch, the Pacific. In the first story, "How John Trueman learned his lesson," we are given a vivid picture of tramp life in rural England and in the slums of London, as experienced by Parson John Trueman, before he started on a missionary career in the South Sea Islands. Incidentally, a fine tribute is paid to Father Damien, the Apostle of the Lepers, whom John Trueman is supposed to have visited at Molokai. "Black-Birding in the Pacific," the skipper's story, as its name implies, deals with the methods of kidnapping the South Sea Islanders for the purposes of

the slave trade, or enforced labour as it is called. "Sam Kent's Story" is the tale of a broken life and two talismanic rings, beginning in London, then recounting some escapades in Mexico after the fall of the ill-fated Maximilian, and finishing up with an adventurous voyage on the Pacific, whilst "The Legend of the Magic Rings" takes us back to Israel and Egypt in the days of King Solomon. The concluding story, "Bridget Macleod of Whinnie Braes," is a reminiscence of the skipper's childhood, in which the scene is laid in the neighbourhood of Glasgow. All the stories are skilfully told, and are full of incident and action, whilst in the two relating to the rings the elements of mystery are not lacking. Some pleasing verses act as preludes to the various tales.—*Cork Examiner.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

We gladly welcome another batch of yarns from Mr. Sinclair, yarns recalling many a vanished scene and good comrade of the old days. It is but a little company, four in all, who squat on the quarter-deck of the "Lapwing" on those enchanting nights on the still waters of Heao to entertain each other with reminiscences of the past. The tales are so cleverly told that the reader is in doubt as to whether he is reading fact or fiction. There is such a glamour of reality over the whole volume that we are bound to feel that the men and women introduced are not altogether fleeting shadows of the imagination. The first story, "How John Trueman Learned His Lesson," sets in lurid and pathetic light the burden of the submerged tenth, the homeless in London and the hard case of the confirmed tramp. The last of the fine tales—"Bridget Macleod of Whinnie Braes"—will be particularly welcome to Scottish readers. It is a pretty and

touching picture of life in a west country shieling. In "Sam Kent's Story" (the longest of the five), and "Black Birding in the Pacific," Mr. Sinclair takes us once more to the Southern Pacific, with the scenery and customs of which he is most familiar, and the beauty of which he describes with enchanting charm. It is a real pleasure to read this well written volume with such a marked vein of poetry running through it. We might address Mr. Sinclair as the skipper did Friend Trueman when he had finished his story and say he has put us all under a deep debt of gratitude. The cheers which Sam Kent and his friends felt disposed to bestow upon the Parson we would warmly accord to Mr. Sinclair for the interesting and touching bits of life history he has given us. The stories are full of incident and action, with fine touches of humour and pathos.—*Perthshire Courier.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Readers who are acquainted with Mr. Francis Sinclair's work will need no commendation of ours to induce them to read "From the Four Winds." Those who do not yet know this author's admirable stories have a great pleasure before them. There is a straightforwardness and simplicity, there is an old-fashioned piety in these yarns which are as rare nowadays as they are delightful. Mr. Sinclair has been a wanderer in many lands. He is familiar with English roads, with London slums, with the marvellous islands of the South Pacific, with Mexico, with the Sahara Desert; above all, with the sea, and the men who go down to it in ships. His stories give us the impression of being founded on actual personal experience, touched up, no doubt, their colours heightened, but substantially true. There are five stories in the book, all of them so good that it is hard to make a choice among them.

Individual taste will count in deciding which is the best, and we give our vote for "Blackbirding in the Pacific" for the sake of the wonderful account of the schooner's sailing, the best and most vivid narrative of the kind we have read since we followed the voyage of Stevenson's schooner in "The Wreckers." Sam Kent's story has another wonderful voyage in it—a crossing of the Pacific by a crew of four who felt their way from Mexico to Tahiti with the help of a compass and a log line. But the first story in the book, "How John Trueman Learned His Lesson" is very good too, and among the tributes to the noble life of Father Damien there is none more convincing than that which this story contains. Mr. Sinclair is well known, and deserves to be much better known. We heartily commend his new book.—*The Irish Times.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Another volume of stories of adventure has been compiled by Mr. Francis Sinclair on similar lines to his previous work, "Under North Star and Southern Cross." "From the Four Winds" purports to be a further draft upon the memory of the writer of personal experiences in many parts of the world, and of stories told him by friends. There are five tales, the two best of which tell of the search for two magic rings, and how their mysterious occult power was put into use. The others are interesting, and the book is one with which a very pleasant leisure hour may be spent. Much of the charm of the stories is due to the author's power of description and his knowledge and acquaintance with the different places mentioned.—*Dundee Advertiser.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Mr. Francis Sinclair's new volume is the work of a man who has the "wanderlust" very strongly developed in his constitution. He is a wanderer on the face of the earth—and on the face of the waters that cover the earth; and his friends must be men who have been wanderers like himself. The stories in this book, about which there is obviously little of the fictitious element, range from the islands of the Pacific to the streets of London, and the grim tragedy of the men who have "gone under"; from Mexico in Maximilian's time to tramp-life "on the road" in England. And in every instance one finds the same keen eye for romantic adventure, the same atmosphere of absolute reality, and a curious, restrained power of narrative which impresses the reader strangely. Such a book challenges comparison with the work of writers like Mr. W. H. Hudson or Mr. Cunninghame Grahame. There is the same impatient distaste for the methodical life of "civilized" nations; and, as in the case of both these authors, a keen sympathy with the outcast, the wayfaring man, and the man who has failed.

The following passage from "Sam Kent's Story" expresses this spirit completely:

" . . . the Pacific, the sea of witchery and enchanted islands, where all who listen to the sirens' songs, and drink of the silent river of Lethe, fall into the sleep of dreams—the sleep from which men never awaken in this world. That is, they never awaken to the old energetic life of Europe. If ever they do come into what is called 'civilized life,' they are like sleep-walkers. . . . Their real selves are far away, where the warm tropic seas are laving the coral reefs, and the soft trade winds are whispering their witching songs in the tinkling fronds of the palm groves."

But Mr. Sinclair can be no mere dreamer. Men of action live and move, fight and fail, in these pages. One might go far before finding a more tellingly simple piece of prose than the missionary, John Trueman's, description of his visit to Father Damien, hero and saint, at the Leper Settlement of Kalawao; or the horrible story of "Black-Birding in the Pacific," and its evil consequences for white men and brown. The author is a poet, too, and the verse-preludes which preface each story are as vivid, as vigorously written, and as fascinating as the rest of this remarkable book.—*Sheffield Daily Telegraph.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

We have had the pleasure of noticing two of Mr. Sinclair's former books, and we hasten to assure the many admirers of "Where the Sun Sets," which is the last of his we were privileged to handle, that they will find all the qualities which have endeared him to them in his latest volume. He has travelled much and observed keenly; best of all, he is able to make us see what he has seen for himself. There is a direct simplicity in his style which carries home his meaning to the heart of his reader. Many readers will find a peculiar pleasure in the verses with which each story is preluded. Picturesque as the stories are, we are not sure that the verses are not better than the prose. There are five stories altogether, and we decline to choose between them. They are all marked by the same wide experience, by the same knowledge of human nature, yet in each is some special distinctive charm. But may we quote a few stanzas from a little poem embedded in "How John Trueman Learned his Lesson"?

I cannot tell why hearts must break
And eyes must weep;
I cannot tell why Death should take
What I would keep.

. . . . . .

I am but as a little child
Out in the night,
I only hear the storm-wrack wild,
I see no light.

No light, but in the dark I feel
A Blessed Hand
With wounds! but, oh! a Hand to heal
And understand

My doubt, my terror, and my pain,
And hold me safe;
And make a happy child again
Of wandering waif.

The last line lacks a little, but if this is not good work, we are no judge.—*The Advertiser.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

The title of Mr. Francis Sinclair's latest contribution to literature in itself gives an indication of the nature of the volume. It is a collection of stories of adventure and mystery gathered from "a' the airts." Mr. Sinclair has spent much of his life abroad, and travelled in many lands and sailed on many seas. He also belongs to a coterie of wanderers who make it a point, if at all possible, to gather together once a year in London and relate stories of their adventures. All the members of this little circle are far-

. .

travelled—according to the rules, each must have spent at least a fifth of his life abroad—and from them and their reminiscences the author has accumulated much material for his writings. In his own travels Mr. Sinclair has gained much out-of-the-way knowledge, and his stories show an acquaintance with men, countries, and customs which can only be the result of practical experience. No matter where the scene of his tale may be laid, he knows it thoroughly. He is equally at home in the crowded cities of Great Britain, in the deserts of the East, or in the midst of the tropical splendour of the magic islands of the Southern Pacific. Wherever he has gone his observant eye and receptive mind have found something worth recording, and he introduces into his tales many details that are both interesting and instructive, and that add to the keenness of the relish which the reader experiences, as well as proclaiming him a master of his art. The local colour is, indeed, remarkable.—*People's Journal.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Few, indeed, are the story-tellers of to-day who work in the vein of Mr. Sinclair. This was easily seen in "Under the North Star and Southern Cross"; here it is proved beyond all doubt. While others prefer to hunt up new scents in human interest, stirring up foul smells here and there, or to paint their sky of fiction a flaming red with passions and other sorts, he is content to pursue a quiet course, that appeals strongly if only on account of its true humanness. His method is simple; his style is direct, without being snappy; his atmosphere is always true to its locale; and if his women are shadowy, his men are certainly not, although he is no maker of "characters."

In the present volume he gives us five stories, some

verse, and a few poems such as one rarely finds in the work of the so-called "minor" poet. Would that we had space wherein to quote the beautiful thing, "I ask no more," which he has put into "How John Trueman Learned his Lesson." This tale, which has a lesson that any man may learn, to his benefit, concerns an itinerant missionary in the Marquesas Islands, who had worked with Father Damien, the leper martyr. It is pathetic, with a touch of noble philosophy running through its texture. Another story is of "blackbirding" in the Pacific; not the slave-carrying of older times, but something pretty near it.

What we like best, however, is "Sam Kent's Story" and its sequel, "The Legend of the Magic Rings." Here, without any "sensation," there is more colour, more movement, more variety than there are in the other stories. They are supposed to be told by different men; and the one fault that strikes us is that they speak too much alike, and that at times the language is hardly the medium of direct verbal narrative.—*The Daily Chronicle.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Even though, according to the statistics of the Free Libraries, the demand for any books, except those which come under the head of pure fiction, is very limited, there are still a few women, in the nursing profession as elsewhere, who delight in books of travel. These will like to read the latest volume from the pen of Francis Sinclair. The author of "From the Four Winds" is a travelled Scotsman who from time to time has issued collections of stories, weird, romantic, or pathetic, as the case may be. His latest book contains tales of adventure which read as if the incidents are taken from first-hand experience on

the part of the narrators—chums, who tell their own tales in turn. Interspersed are verses of no mean merit. The prelude to the tales has so true a ring, both in rhythm and sentiment, that we must quote it:

Only the flickering firelight in my room,
  Only bells tolling for the dying year,
Only the silence and the midnight gloom,
  And then my ghosts appear!

And on my hands kind loving hands are laid,
  And o'er my face the tears of parting fall,
And through my room's uncertain light and shade,
  I hear old voices call!

. . . . . .

"From the Four Winds" is essentially a book for readers who prefer to read short stories and those of a virile type.—*The Nursing Mirror.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

Again we take pleasure in announcing a new book from the pen of Francis Sinclair, well and favourably known as a writer of clever, clean literature. The book is entitled "From the Four Winds," and depicts strange phases of life in little-known parts of the world. The stories are told on board the "Lapwing," the schooner belonging to our old friend Capt. Kinross. Moored in the little harbour of Heao, one of the Marquesas Isles, on a beautiful moonlight night fate elects that the first story should be told by the Rev. John Trueman, a Cornishman and a Missionary. "How John Trueman learned his lesson" is a narrative beautiful and inspiring, but in-

describably sad. Pitiful efforts after prayer, wild searching for light, for mental resolve, and strength till "out in the night on the wide, wild sea" he found the wounded hand and would not let it go till it blessed him.

"Black-birding in the Pacific" the skipper himself graphically relates. That iniquitous trading by enticing poor, foolish Kanakas on board "slavers"—for they were nothing else—on the one hand, and on the other devoted Christian men and women carrying the Gospel of Mercy to these same islanders, who, not having the proper power of discrimination between types of white men too often made Christian whites the scape-goats of the greedy power of capital. "Sam Kent's Story" and "The Magic Rings" are complement of each other. Weirdly mystic, with a great depth of passion and imagination there is a blending of the old and new, the soul aids the body and at moments raises it. In the long terrible march from the Nile to the "Oasis of Pride and Vain Delight" and from thence to the "Oasis of Truth" splendid descriptive work is done.

The last story is that of "Bridget Macleod of Whinnie Braes" and is a personal reminiscence of Capt. Kinross. It is the simple, but impressive story of a Scotch lassie whose heart broke while waiting for a braw laddie to make his fortune abroad. "Thirty years on this lonely hill-side! watching my sweet bonnie youth slipping from me year by year; my raven hair whitening, my smooth cheek wrinkling, and the step that never tired wearying for rest." "The accursed stuff that robbed me of life and love." "Take care it dinna rob you of your soul at last." Kinross closes with: "I sat and grat some heavy tears on his grass-grown grave in the old village kirkyard on the Mull o' Kintyre, where Donald and Bridget are now lying within cry of each other at last, although they missed their road so hopelessly through all the summer of their lives."

Mr. Sinclair's characters are taken from life, and the main incidents in his tales are true. The charm lies in his original treatment of the common-place, in his sympathy with struggling humanity, and in his power to point a moral. While entertaining to the mind, his stories are helpful to the soul.

The book is published by Sampson Low, Marston and Co., Ltd., London, England.—*The British Californian.*

FROM THE FOUR WINDS.

They [the stories] go deeply into life, principally into life on the Pacific Islands, and give vivid and arresting pictures of people and places that are little known. Their sincerity is very marked, and Mr. Sinclair proves himself one of the very few writers who are able to deal unaffectedly in fiction with such a problem as that of the coloured races. His book should be read both for its thoughtfulness and its real literary merit.—*Daily Mail.*

BALLADS AND POEMS FROM THE PACIFIC.

Amidst the many books of verse—generally only efforts in rhyme, and often very bad efforts—it is pleasant to meet with a volume that has the true poetic ring and poetic feeling. "Ballads and Poems from the Pacific," by Philip Garth,[1] have much of the rhythmical swell, of the vigour combined with sweetness, that are among the charms of lyric poetry.—*Illustrated London News.*

Philip Garth's "Ballads and Poems from the Pacific" are flavoured with much of the freshness of the salt-sea foam, and the keen stimulating air of Western lands. As a writer of ballads Mr. Garth is at his best. Many of these are, indeed, very spirited and individual.—*Saturday Review.*

I have rarely come across so delightfully fresh yet reposeful a volume of exquisite verse as "Ballads and Poems from the Pacific."—*Penny Illustrated Paper.*

Mr. Garth is a poet. There are some right good things among these ballads and poems—beautiful language, fine ideas, stirring songs of the sea, and very tender poems in another vein.—*Topical Times.*

"Ballads and Poems from the Pacific," by Philip Garth. Mr. Garth adds one more to the ballad-writers whose muse is inspired by the sea, and, in particular, by the Pacific, where, to quote his own words—

The Cross of stars is gleaming over wondrous isles of palm,
Where rose-hued reefs of coral flash through seas of perfect calm.

[1] The *nom de plume* under which Mr. Sinclair wrote at that time.

His "Sketch in the Pacific," "With Franky Drake," and "The Dying Bushranger," are such as Charles Kingsley would not have been ashamed to own, and that he is a good master of pathos is evident from the effective lines: "The House we Build at Last," "Vanity of Vanities," and others.—*Bookseller.*

WHERE THE SUN SETS.

Be the origin of these tales what it may—whether they possess substantial basis of fact, as is more than hinted in a preface, or are the outcome of the fertile imagination of a man who has travelled much in the Pacific—they are of a character that will appeal strongly to many readers. It may be that several of them are too sad and pathetic for some people. But in any case, they are distinguished by feelings of the kindliest nature and a warm-hearted sympathy that renders even the weirdest of the stories not unpleasing. Adventures on sea and land stand out prominently in some of the tales. All will be read and some of them will be remembered.—*Scotsman.*

Some of the tales are exciting, some pathetic, some weird and terrifying, some plaintive and passionate. All are interesting and well-written, and will be read, alike by travellers and stay-at-homes, with the greatest avidity.—*Glasgow Herald.*

The tales given consist of accounts of episodes and adventures in America, the South Seas, and other parts of the world, and are all written fluently, graphically, and attractively.—*Bookseller.*

"Where the Sun Sets" is a congeries of good things. There is a pleasant variety of themes presented in these four hundred and forty-nine pages of "Memories from other Years and Lands"—Mr. Sinclair's sub-title to his latest book. It is a wide, wandering and thoughtful muse that presided over the selections of a traveller who knows the isles of the western seas "from Tahiti to Fiji and from Tonga to Hawaii." Great merit, a very true balance between dark and bright in spiritual moods, and a sure and quiet mastery of expression are present in the nine stories comprising this book.—*The British Californian.*

The author of this remarkable book says in his preface that he belongs to a "Coterie of wanderers," who make it a point to foregather in London during the month of May —that is, as many of them as happen to be in England at that festive season. One of the rules of the Coterie is that a candidate, before he can join it, must have spent at least a fifth of his life abroad. At their reunions they are expected to recount any striking adventures in which they have taken part, the only condition being that a contribution be edifying as well as entertaining, and that in its main points it must be true. The present volume is the result of notes taken at the meetings by the author.

The stories are all interesting, and they have this element of novelty and freshness that they for the most part describe life in the islands of the Southern Pacific.— *Publishers' Circular.*

UNDER NORTH STAR AND SOUTHERN CROSS.

All these stories are skilfully told; they are full of incident and action, and the element of mystery is not lacking. They will be enjoyed, and more will be looked for from the same pen.—*Scotsman.*

The book is a fine one, both in the idea and the rendering of it, written with a manly touch and an air of truth and experience which we cannot but regard with admiration and respect.—*The Yorkshire Herald.*

Entertaining, profitable, recreative, his stories of his recreations certainly are.—*Sheffield Daily Telegraph.*

The author possesses the essential faculty of a story-teller, that of bringing before his readers actual living pictures of the scenes and people he describes.—*Publishers' Circular.*

The author of a remarkable book, "Where the Sun Sets," being "memories from other years and lands," must have been born with "the wandering foot." He has published another volume of strange incidents and adventures in many countries and varied climes, under the title of "Under North Star and Southern Cross." It is a delightful book, uncommon in its choice of background, and with the freshness of unfamiliar scenes and types.—*Staffordshire Sentinel.*

Not one of the seven stories lacks in that wonderful human interest with which Mr. Sinclair had vested those earlier stories of his in "Where the Sun Sets." They all have a peculiar pathos of their own, and thrill the reader with their evident truth.—*Erith Times.*

In his latest, Mr. Sinclair places most of the scenes in the Southern Pacific and reveals the charm and glamour

of that marvellous region. The story of "The Haunted Ship" is enough to give one "brain storm" to read it, and, strange to say, when the narrative is at its maddest, the sense of reality is still perfect.—*Winnipeg Telegram.*

"Under North Star and Southern Cross" is a book at once true and fascinating, yet dressed in the mantle of intelligent construction. We have perused its seven stories. Each story stands out fair and distinct, perfect as a picture of nature when the sunlight falls upon its various colours and blends them into loveliness. Some are pastoral, some are gloomily tragic. Whether the light falls on the frozen mysteries of the long polar day where the "Haunted Ship" lies silent, grim and ghost-like in an eternal embrace of immaculate purity; on the mystical beauty of tropic isles where dreams of Celestial glory are almost realized; on the shores and waters of beautiful Gairloch; or on the "Lost Oasis of El Darag," each is a mosaic finished and complete.—*The British Californian.*

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